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MEN OF THE WORLD, MID HUM AND STIR, RING OF ANVIL AND FRET OF LOOM.
BUILD FOR YOUR THOUGHT A THOROUGHFARE, KEEP FOR YOUR SOUL A SILENT ROOM.

THE POETRY REVIEW

Edited by Galloway Kyle

American Associate Editor: Alice Hunt Bartlett

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INDEX TO VOLUME XV

ARTICLES AND POEMS

PAGE

Abercrombie, Lascelles. Modern Poetic Drama 79
All for a Child. S. M. Michael 196
America. See
  Ballad Contest.
  City Sonnet Contest.
  Dynamics of American Poetry.
  Parr-Gere Music Poem Contest.
  Poe Cottage Scheme.
  Poetry at the U.S. Capitol.
  Star Sonnet Contest.
  Survey of Colorado Poetry.
  Voices from the Great Inland States.
Ballad Contest, The Foster 342
Bees, The. London Lyrics VII. M. M. Radford 49
Bellaman, Henry. Dynamics of Amer. Poetry V. 319
Benediction. C. Martin Shrobyng. 31
Bethlehem: City Sonnet. Blanche Winder 357
Bird in the Pear Blossom, A. Alberta Vickridge 93
Bland, Henry Meade. Dynamics of Amer. Poetry VI. . . . 389
Bottomley, Gordon. Modern Poetic Drama 77
Brief Reviews of New Books . . 56, 115, 134, 194, 253, 325, 399
Brown, Alice 112
Bruges: City Sonnet. Florence M. Bradford 283
Burn, The. Honor F. Leeke 198
Burns, Dr. Hutton on 335
Bynner, Witter. Dynamics of Amer. Poetry IV. 169
Byron and Greece. Prof. Simos Menardos 211
Byron Centenary, The. The Editor 205, 346
Byron Centenary; The Poetry Society Celebration . . . 267
Byron Centenary Ode. Costis Palamas 223
Byron. The Cosmopolitan Poet. Lord Ernle 221
Carthage: City Sonnet. Miriam Allen de Ford 282
Cedars, The. F. L. Hillier 47
Childhood and Modern Verse. J. Nankivell 225
Children, Poetry For. Blanche Winder 9
Children's Verse Contest 130, 209, 273, 345
City Sonnet Contest 130, 344
City Sonnets:—
  London, Lucy Malleson: *New York*, Morris Gray . . . 281
  Rome, E. Nolan: *Carthage*, Miriam A. de Ford . . . 282
  Bruges, Florence M. Bradford: *New Orleans*, E. R. Dillingham . 283
  San Salvador, G. S. Gittinger: *Santa Fé*, Neita Carey . . . 284
  Bethlehem. Blanche Winder 357
  Venice, Washington Van Dusen: *My City* (*New York*), E. S. Montgomery 358
Clapp, Frederick Mortimer. Dynamics of Amer. Poetry IV. . . 183

INDEX TO VOLUME XV

PAGE

Coatsworth, Elizabeth J. Dynamics of Amer. Poetry IV. . . 180
Coblentz, Stanton A. Dynamics of Amer. Poetry V. . . . 315
Comfort. I. M. Old 310
Coronach. Sybil Grant 293
Cosmopolitan Poet, The. Lord Ernle 221
Cotswold. George Villiers 249
Crazy Song. M. E. Morris 84
Cross Roads. E. M. Kelly 309
Dawn from Pike's Peak. Elizabeth D. Preston 250
Drama: Modern Poetic Drama 69
Dreaming Forward. Nancy Pollok. 30
Dresbach, Glenn Ward. Dynamics of Amer. Poetry IV. . . 178
Duel, The. Harold T. Pulsifer 111
Dunbar, Paul Lawrence: Voices from the Great Inland States . 234
Dynamics of Amer. Poetry. Alice Hunt Bartlett.
III. George Santayana—Edwin Arlington Robinson—Bernice Lesbia Kenyon—Wilbert Snow—Geneviene Taggard . . 33
IV. Witter Bynner—Henry Lane Eno—Marguerite Wilkinson—Glenn Ward Dresbach—Minnie Ferris Hauenstein—Elizabeth J. Coatsworth—John Cowper Powys—Frederick Mortimer Clapp 169
V. Nellie Burget Miller—Stanton A. Coblentz—Margaret Widdemer—Henry Bellaman—Sister M. Madeleva . . 313
VI. Paul Scott Mowrer—Louis Golding—Henry Meade Bland—Muna Lee—W. A. Percy 389
Eluded. Oliver C. de C. Ellis 96
Enchanted Wood, The. Honor F. Leeke 58
Eno, Henry Lane. Dynamics of Amer. Poetry IV. . . . 174
Essays in Critism; Reviews of New Books:—
A Robust New Poet. E. M. Tenison 191
Classical Verse in English Form 119, 325
E. Arlington Robinson's Remarkable New Poem. A. H. B. . 373
Heard on the Highway. Arthur Hood 305
Japanese Poetry. Alice Hunt Bartlett 326
Our Masters. Arthur Hood 53
Shadows in The Blue Pavilion. L. Cranmer Byng . . . 359
The Industrious Ant and the Gay Grasshopper. Arthur Hood . 166
The Road to Castaly. E. M. Tenison 112
Then and Now. E. M. Tenison 297
Flecker, J. E. Modern Poetic Drama 69
For Lack of Days. Erda Lang 84
Fountain, The. Olive Clare Primrose 19
Gateway, The. Clement Wood 248
Ghazal, A. (In Urdu.) H.H. The Mir of Khairpur . . . 20
Ghazal, A. H.H. The Mir of Khairpur 251
Ghazal, The. J. J. Kazi 21
Gibson, W. W. Modern Poetic Drama 83

INDEX TO VOLUME XV

PAGE

Glastonbury Festival, The 333
Golding, Louis. Dynamics of Amer. Poetry VI. 389
Greater Love, The. Conrad Bonacina 18
Great Souls Have Loved the Mountains and the Sea. Hilton R. Greer 250
Harvest Festival. B. M. Powell 369
Hauenstein, Minnie Ferris. Dynamics of Amer. Poetry IV. . . 179
High Noon. Mary Coles Carrington 184
Hope. S. Marguerite Goode 8
How Do Your Poems Come ? 190
I Can Forget. R. R. Greenwood 381
I Did Not Think. E. Joyce Harrison 149
I Love. Lillith Shell 295
In Defence. E. M. Frampton 296
In Exile. John Meddop 338
In London. London Lyrics, XI. Lettie Cole 52
In Memory of Khama. D. J. Darlow 132
In The Rain. Nancy Pollok 367
Indian Wedding, An. Elsa Kazi 311
Indian Verse Competition 251
Insomnia. William Alexander Percy 47
Joyful Loneliness. London Lyrics, VIII. Monica Painter . . 49
Kenyon, B. L. Dynamics of Amer. Poetry III. 38
Killing Time. Winifred Cousins 248
Kingly Legend in English Poetry, The. Blanche Winder . 285, 382
Last of the Goths, The. Margaret Maitland Radford . . . 141
Lee, Muna. Dynamics of Amer. Poetry VI. 389
Life's Recessional. Alice Hunt Bartlett 48
Lindsay, Vachel. Voices from the Great Inland States . . . 104
London : City Sonnet. Lucy Malleson 281
London Lament, A. London Lyrics, X. Margaret Hume . . 51
London Lyrics :
VII. *The Bees.* Margaret M. Radford 49
VIII. *Joyful Loneliness.* Monica Painter. 49
IX. *The Street Violinist.* Eleanor Renard 50
X. *A London Lament.* Margaret Hume 51
XI. *In London.* Lettie Cole 52
XII. *Sweet Lavender.* E. D. Bangay 99
XIII. *Random Ecstasies.* Hilda Drabble 99
XIV. *Traffic.* W. Tasker 99
XV. *Youth in London.* Doris Westwood 100
XVI. *Protest from London.* Molly Young 100
Madeleva, Sister M. Dynamics of Amer. Poetry V. . . . 322
Masque : The Passing of Youth. Eva Dobell 157
Masters, Edgar Lee. Voices from the Great Inland States . . 185
Memory. A. B. Annakin 29
Merrie Gentlemen. Frances Beatrice Taylor 31

INDEX TO VOLUME XV

PAGE

Mexican Poets, Some Modern. Mrs. Stuart Erskine . . . 1
Mickiewicz. See Poet-Patriot, A.
Miller, Nellie Burget. Dynamics of Amer. Poetry V. . . . 313
Modern Poetic Drama. Blanche Winder 69
Mountain Pathway, The. Hilda Skae 97
Mountains at Dawn. Florence Lederer 310
Mowrer, Paul Scott. Dynamics of Amer. Poetry VI. . . . 389
My City (New York): City Sonnet. Elizabeth S. Montgomery . 358
New Orleans: City Sonnet. Elizabeth R. Dillingham . . . 283
New York: City Sonnet. Morris Gray 281
Noël. F. B. Taylor 371
Notes. Reports. Announcements . . 65, 134, 202, 270, 248
Nursery Nocturne. Dorothy Una Ratcliffe 44
Old Woman, The. Z. M. Thorne 90
On Preparing to Write a Spring Poem. Hilton R. Greer . . 220
On the Speaking of Verse 59
Oriental Forms of Poetry :—
I. The Ghazal. J. J. Kazi 21
Palamas, Kostes. Modern Poetic Drama 84
Parr-Gere Music Poem Contest 202
Passing of Youth, The: A Masque. Eva Dobell 157
Path, The. Elizabeth J. Coatsworth 296
Percy, W. A. Dynamics of Amer. Poetry VI. 389
Pigeons and Peacocks. Marion Allison 28
Pioneers, The. Elizabeth D. Preston 304
Plaque, The. Geoffrey Arden Gibbs 32
Poe Cottage Scheme 341
Poems. Edna A. Kahla 405
Poet-Patriot, A. Charles Whitby 122
Poet Out of Love, The. Audrey Wrangham 27
Poetry at the U.S. Capitol 85
Poetry for Children. Blanche Winder 9
Poetry of James Rhoades, The. J. Nankivell 232
Poplar on a Wet Night, A. Honor F. Leeke 58
Powys, John Cooper. Dynamics of Amer. Poetry IV. . . . 182
Prayer, A. S. M. Goode 98
Premium Editor's Report 57, 127, 197, 261, 337, 405
Protest from London: London Lyrics XVI. Molly Young . . 100
Random Ecstasies: London Lyrics XIII. Hilda Drabble . . 99
Resurrection. V. D. Goodwin 95
Rhoades, James. See Poetry of James Rhoades.
Robinson, Edwin Arlington. Dynamics of Amer. Poetry III. . . 36
Rome: City Sonnet. E. Nolan 282
Ronsard, Pierre de: An Appreciation. Lewis Davies . . . 377
Sandburg, Carl. Voices from the Great Inland States . . . 101
San Salvador: City Sonnet. G. S. Gittinger 284

INDEX TO VOLUME XV

PAGE

Santa Fé: City Sonnet. Neita Carey 284
Santayana, George. Dynamics of Amer. Poetry III. 33
Sea, The. Frank Lacy Hillier 47
Silences. Winifred Davidson 295
Snow, Wilbert. Dynamics of Amer. Poetry III. 40
Some Modern Mexican Poets. Mrs. Stuart Erskine 1
Song of Glamorgan, A. Lewis Davies 125
Sonnets. Henry Grafton Chapman 45
Speaking of Verse, On the 59
Gold Medal Examination Report 62
Examination Pass Lists 63
Star Sonnet Contest 201, 265
Street Violinist, The: London Lyrics IX. Eleanor Renard . . 50
Survey of Colorado Poetry. Elizabeth D. Preston 241
Sweet Lavender: London Lyrics XII. E. D. Bangay . . . 99
Swimmer, The. Sister M. Madeleva 310
Symbolic Beauty in Romantic Poetry. Federico Olivero . . . 150
Taggard, Geneviene. Dynamics of Amer. Poetry III. . . . 42
These Three. Leighton Rollins 292
Thomas, Edith M. Voices from the Great Inland States . . 235
To A Dead Child. M. W. 30
To Herbert Trench. T. C. Lewis 68
To Shelley. "Philomel" 372
Traffic: London Lyrics XIV. W. Tasker 99
Treasure Ship, The. M. Thomlinson 309
Tryst. Margaret Widdemer. 48
Venable, William Henry. Voices from the Great Inland States . 234
Venice: City Sonnet. Washington Van Duren 358
Voice of the Deep, The. George Sterling 91
Voices from the Great Inland States. Alice Hunt Bartlett.
Illinois: Carl Sandburg—Vachel Lindsay 101
Edgar Lee Masters 185
Ohio: William Henry Venable—Edith M. Thomas—Paul Lawrence Dunbar 234
Way, The. Herbert H. Longfellow 111
West Indian Fragments. Frank Lacy Hillier 47
When I am Old. Phœbe Fenwick Gaye 29
Widdemer, Margaret. Dynamics of Amer. Poetry V. . . . 317
Wilkinson, Marguerite. Dynamics of Amer. Poetry IV. . . . 176
Wind Flower, The. Belfrage Gilbertson. 381
Wind in the Night. Marion Allison 264
World's End. Witter Bynner 92
Ye Sparrows. Honor F. Leeke 370
Yeats, W. B. Modern Poetic Drama 74
You. R. Fortescue Doria 366
Youth in London: London Lyrics XV. Doris Westwood . . 100

INDEX TO VOLUME XV

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

	PAGE
Allison, Marion	28, 264
Annakin, B.	29
Bangay, Evelyn D.	99, 121, 194, 253
Bartlett, Alice Hunt	33, 48, 85, 101 169, 185, 234, 313, 326, 373, 389
Bonacina, Conrad	18
Bradford, Florence M.	283
Bynner, Witter	92
Carey, Neita	284
Carrington, Mary Coles	184
Chapman, Henry Grafton	45
Coatsworth, Elizabeth J.	296
Cole, Lettie	52
Cousins, Winifred	248
Cranmer-Byng, L.	359
Davidson, Winifred	295
Davies, Lewis	123, 125, 377
Dillingham, Elizabeth R.	283
Dobell, Eva	157
Doria, R. Fortescue	366
Drabble, Hilda	99
Ellis, Oliver C. de C.	96
Ernle, Lord	221
Erskine, Mrs. Stuart	1
Ford, Miriam Allen de	282
Frampton, F. M.	296
Gaye, Phoebe Fenwick	29
Gibbs, Geoffrey Arden	32
Gilbertson, Belfrage	381
Gittinger, Georgiana S.	284
Goode, S. Marguerite	8, 98
Goodwin, V. D.	95
Grant, The Lady Sybil	293
Gray, Morris	281
Greenwood, R. R.	351
Greer, Hilton R.	220, 250
Garrison, F. Joyce	149
Hillier, Frank Lacy	47
Hood, Arthur	53, 115, 166, 255, 305
Hume, Margaret	51
Kahla, Edna A.	405
Kazi, Elsa	20, 251, 311
Kazi, J. J.	21
Kelly, E. M.	309
Khairpur, H.H. the Mir of	20, 251
Kirtlan, E. J. B., D.D.	258
Lang, Erda	84
Lederer, Florence	310
Leeke, Honor F.	58, 198, 370
Lewis, T. C.	68
Longfellow, Herbert H.	111
Madeleva, Sister M.	310
Malleson, Lucy	281
Meddop, John	368
Menardos, Simos	211
Michael, S. M.	196
Montgomery, Elizabeth Shaw	358
Morris, M. E.	84
M. W.	30
Nankivell, J.	225, 232
Nolan, E.	282
Old, I. M.	310
Olivero, Federico	150
Painter, Monica	49
Palamas, Costis	223
Percy, William A.	47
"Philomel"	372
Pollok, Nancy	30, 367
Powell, B. M.	369
Preston, Elizabeth D.	241, 250
Primrose, Olive Clare	19
Pulsifer, Harold T.	111
Radford, Margaret M.	49, 141
Ratcliffe, Dorothy Una	44
Renard, Eleanor	50
Rollins, Leighton	292
Shell, Lillith	295
Shrobyng, C. Martin	31
Skae, Hilda	97
Sterling, George	91
Tasker, W.	99
Taylor, Frances Beatrice	31, 371
Tenison, E. M.	112, 191, 297
Thomlinson, M.	309
Thorne, Z. M.	90
Van Dusen, Washington	358
Vickridge, Alberta	93
Villiers, George	249
Westwood, Doris	100
Whitby, Charles	122
Widdemer, Margaret	48
Winder, Blanche	9, 69, 285, 333 357, 382
Wood, Clement	248
Wrangham, Audrey	27
Young, Molly	100

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SOME MODERN MEXICAN POETS

IN an article recently published in *El Universal*, of Mexico, that very interesting writer Guillermo Jimenez raised the question as to what name should be given precedence when considering the poets of modern Mexico. Among the many names brought forward were those of Diaz Mirón, Enrique Gonzáles Martinez, Gutiérrez Nájara, José Juan Tablada, Ramon Lopez Velarde, Amado Nervo and others. In this brief article I propose to take a glance at the work of Amado Nervo, whose poetry is already famous, and of a few others not so well known to fame as some of the others that I have just mentioned.

Since Rubén Darió first delighted the Spanish-speaking world with his melodious verse, there has been no Mexican poet who has been so generally appreciated as the late Amado Nervo, thirteen of whose poems are included in the *Lirica Mexicana*, published by the Mexican Legation in Madrid in 1919. In this same year *The Hundred Best Pöems of Amado Nervo* were published by *Cultura* (vol. X, No. 6), and in 1920 the complete edition of his works was produced by the Biblioteca Nueva of Madrid.

Amado Nervo was born in 1870; he was only forty-nine years old when he died in 1919. During the last thirty years of his life he produced a stream of poetry which will make his name live, giving not only examples of his technically skilful verse, but also a record of his inner life and aspirations. Surely no poet has given a fuller record of his soul's journey through life, or has so definitely modified his technique to suit the message that he had to give.

Nervo had a great lyrical gift which manifested itself in his early work, but he became so obsessed by his mystical dreams and his philosophy that he rejected the intricate metre in which he had delighted, as being too artificial, and adopted a style that showed some sympathy with Walt Whitman, one of whose poems he translated. His lyrical gift survived all his efforts to throw away technical craft, and his strong individual note persisted through the change in his artistic methods brought about chiefly, if not entirely, by his inner development. It was not so much that his

ideal of beauty altered, as that he sacrificed it in an endeavour to touch the highest string in his spiritual lyre.

Nervo was a true mystic, always listening to the vibrations of life : he was introspective, analytical, inclined to symbolism, an idealist. As a poet he was always attracted by the sadness of unrequited love rather than its joy, he preferred a pale beauty to a rosy one, twilight to the glare of noon, a romance by Chopin to a triumphal march.

> Rather than roses I love the lilies
> And the immaculate gardenias ;
> Rather than the blood and fire of the carnation
> I adore the sensitive plant.

It is impossible to give an idea of all the work of this prolific writer, who produced patriotic odes, eclogues, narrative poems, verses for children, as well as those later poems that are perhaps the most characteristic of his genius. Taking a love poem in his earlier style and contrasting it with one of the mystical poems in the *Pool of the Lotus* will give some idea of the change that came over his method as well as his inspiration. It is unluckily impossible, in view of the few people who cultivate the Spanish language, to give the poems in the original ; it is therefore a case of rendering the sense in prose.

The first, *Triste*, is frankly sensuous.

" Hand that caressed, lips a chalice of delight, white breast a pillow for my dreams, shining eyes, green seas—green seas so crystal clear.

" Now are you gone and lie still, pale, caressing hands, long ivory hands, now are you gone and lie still sleepy, shining eyes, subtly narcotic.

" Head of glorious golden ripples, there's a hollow in the pillow of our bridal bed ; head of glorious golden ripples, what an immensity of void is all around ! . . ."

Compare this or *Diafanidad* with its intricate rhythm, to a simple word picture like that given in *Another flower by the way*, in which we see a laughing girl and her white-haired grandmother who never smiles. The grandmother counts, with her trembling hands, the amethyst beads of

her rosary, or spins at her wheel, mingling memories with her yarn. And she is obsessed by the fear, which is afterwards realised, that the grandchild will suffer for her too great mirth. "Do not laugh so much," she says, "or to-morrow you may weep."

From the poems of his early and middle period, sometimes merry, but more often with an underlying sadness, the poet passed to the last period in which he renounced the ritual of religion for the inner life and sacrificed the technical graces of style for a more direct presentment of the gospel of religion and art that he wanted to express. His philosophy of life was essentially fine and helpful. At the conclusion of one of his books, he writes: "Reader, this book, without rhetoric, without precedent, without technique, without literature, has only one purpose—to elevate your spirit. Happy shall I be if I accomplish it!"

The man who had written in earlier days: "God forbid, poet, that you should let fall into the cup of your brother one drop of bitterness. . . . God forbid, poet, that you should write a saddening stanza or disturb with your frown and your sad logic the divine logic of a dream," was true to his ideal to the end. His poems are alive with spiritual consolation and with hope. "In the warm evenings," he writes, "sitting out on the wide balcony of my quiet room, a book in my hand, I contemplate the landscape austere and beautiful, and my placid spirit, moved by a religious fervour, stretches out lovingly its golden wings in search of the Absolute!"

As his life drew near its close, he seems to have had a forewarning of death which he received with joy: "I am going to be born because I die!" A year before he died he wrote *The Pensive Helmsman.*

"Pensive helmsman, mysterious helmsman, you ask me to follow you, and I will go in your luminous bark across the mad seas of life. Where are you going? What matters it? I will go with you to any port. I know well that our journey is a return, and that you are bound for my own country."

Amado Nervo looked on life with all its sorrows from the

philosophic standpoint. In *The Gift* he asks life what gift is reserved for him at the end. "Is it a great love? a great peace? an answer to the enigmas of life? . . . make haste, O life, for it is already evening . . . be quick and bring the gift! . . ." yet we find him saying in *Peace* that he blesses life that has not lured him with false hopes, nor meted out unjust punishment. "I loved, was loved, the sun shone on my face. Life, you owe me nothing! Life, we are at peace!"

In striking contrast to the luxuriant output of Nervo is that of one of the younger Mexican poets, whose latest work is included in a small oblong booklet. It is the *Itinerario Contemplativo* of Francisco Monterde Garcia Icazbalceta. The keynote of this poet's style is condensation, his ideal that of the Japanese artists who present a picture with delicate strokes of the brush, with the utmost economy of line. This sympathy with the subtle and delicate art of Japan is insisted on in the appreciation in verse written by the poet José Juan Tablada, whose charming poem *Japan*, in the *Lirica Mexicana*, also shows his own tendency in the same direction. The quotation from Lafcadio Hearn's *Japanese Butterflies* reminds us that Japanese art can only be appreciated after long study.

The poems in this little book never exceed three lines, and are often compressed into two; sometimes they rhyme, sometimes they are free. As a rule, they contain fewer syllables than are found in the name of their creator, Francisco Monterde Garcia Icazbalceta, a sonorous name that is brought into the introductory poem with good effect.

The contemplative journey takes us from Mexico City to Orizaba, from Orizaba to Rio Blanco, from Rio Blanco to Vera Cruz; from the temperate zone to the "Tierra Caliente." What a journey! The mind involuntarily conjures up pictures of wonderful scenery—above all, of colour.

Mexico City, sometimes spoken of as a miniature Paris, has its modern streets, its tramways, a sixteenth-century Cathedral, a Museum in which the old cruel gods are enthroned among the blatant feather-work, and the ex-

quisite and intricate ornamental designs of the Aztec ; it has libraries, colleges and a University. If the new element predominates, you cannot go far without coming up against evidences of the past. You stand on the site of Montezuma's Tenochtitlan, and the trams run along the old causeway where the Spaniards put up such a desperate fight in the early sixteenth century. And then the views all around are superb ! Before opening the *Itinerario* we wonder how it can be compressed within its slim covers.

The city of Madrid stands in the centre of the high table-land of Anahuac, six thousand odd feet above sea-level ; all around are the mountain tops, greatest of which is Popacatapetl, the Great Volcano, whose cone-shaped snow-covered summit rises to over 18,000 feet, and Ixtaccihuatl (the White Woman), whose summit is in the shape of a dead body, shrouded by the eternal snows. The surrounding country is remarkable for profuse vegetation ; it is especially a land where colour runs riot. Flaming scarlet creepers flaunt to the tops of the forest trees, scarlet birds flit in and out of the branches of the deciduous cedars. Cascades of crimson and mauve bougainvilleas hang over the walls of the villas, and the poorest hut has a streak of vivid blue convolvulus climbing over the doorway. Even where the interminable fields of grey-green maguey or the plantations of green-grey eucalyptus make the scene monotonous, there is sure to be some sudden note of colour. It may be the flora, or a little orange grove, or a mosque-like church whose many-coloured tiled dome flashes like a jewel in the sunshine ; it may be only the great blue dome of the sky seen through the translucent air which, at that altitude, is so clear that all colour is intensified.

But Señor Icazbalceta is not occupied with the obvious ; he aims at producing a word picture that will give some idea, wrapped in a certain atmosphere ; often he takes some common object, presented deftly, with the reserve of an artist of old Japan working on a simple design with a camel's-hair brush.

It is hard to express in a translation anything so elusive and so simple, depending on the choice of the exact right

word; but the attempt must be made. We must try to see with his eyes.

We are in the train.

The square pane of the window is the screen of the cinematograph, the page of a book, the lens of a camera.

The poet looks through his window, but he gives us few pictures of the country he passes; instead we learn that the telegraph wires suggest the idea of Civilization watching and listening by the wayside, or that the alcohol of the world lights up the green flame of the maguey. In a joking mood he asks: "Who would play billiards on the green table of the wheat field?" He passes through a tunnel: "The sun, an interval of shadow, and again the sun." Of the engine he says: "The monotonous beat of the heart of steel absorbs and synchronises the heart-beats of all." "The rocks of the Tagus are gesticulating idols and clenched fists that threaten the pass."

In a more imaginative vein he sees: "A goat: is it a faun? A horseman: is it a centaur?" A town clock brings this reflection: "From the mouldy tower the ancient clock drops the hours like tears." A city lit up is but a shower of sparks from the engine. The bridge, astride over the ravine, lets the river flow between its legs.

Among the most attractive of the colour notes are the following.

"Oranges." "Silver and gold, flower and fruit, Among the branches the dusk." The Moon in the sea. From the waters the moon has recovered the silver that sank with the pirates.

"Gold, sun and amber, the skins of the women of Vera Cruz."

From these few disconnected extracts it is difficult to realise the contemplative journey; and, in any case, it is wise to remember the words of Lafcadio Hearn concerning the impossibility of appreciating the epigrammatic poetry of Japan without serious study.

The journey ends with these words:

> Friends, this is all that I bring
> For you: my sincerity that has flowered
> In my hand-bag.

Don Rafael Heliodoro Valle brings us to quite a new line of art. His *Anfora Sedienta* has been likened by a critic to one of those metal amphoræ designed by the clever goldsmiths of the Renaissance, decorated with figures of sphinxes with opalescent eyes and salamanders with ruby eyes and sirens with eyes of emeralds. And truly this poet has a love of colour, a cult for jewels, a mediæval sense of beauty which are very striking.

For this reason, if for no other, it is difficult to give an idea of his poetic gift. He has no special message to give, he breaks no new ground; he is content with the subjects and the metres that have served many other poets, yet he always gives an individual note. A pretty picture of the immemorial Spanish custom, transplanted, like so many others, into this far-off land, of a lover waiting outside his lady's balcony is given in a poem entitled *Her Balcony*. Some excerpta may be roughly translated into prose:

"Dark beauty of my race, I feel this evening as Dante felt when he first saw Beatrice. Let the emotion well up from the bottom of my heart, let me have the illusion of a perfect joy as my forehead touches the iron of your balcony.

"Your balcony, so finely wrought by the artificers of old, used to seem to me, as I saw it afar off, as the gates of Paradise. Who knows what ancestor of yours—he may have been a great noble—did me the favour of building his house facing the west, so that my love might blossom in the glow of the setting sun? . . .

. . . .

"How warm it is on your balcony! how sleepy the evening. . . . The quiet of the street encourages my boldness. . . . Put your arms round me and give me a kiss . . . for a kiss is the guerdon of love!"

Here is a little word picture from another poem:

> The dawn would be so soft and clear and still,
> And every evening clear and soft and fine,
> And all the nights so fine and clear the trill
> Is plainly heard of the golden oriole.

Another modern Mexican poet is Enrique Bernandez Ledesma, whose volume of verse is called *With Thirsty Lips*. He is a seeker, a restless enquirer, always asking the answer to the riddles of life and doing it in very light, harmonious metre. His style lends itself to subjects of the day, and he has the gift of making the reader visualise his subject. We see with his eyes the sun-scorched streets of Mexico City, as his eyes follow the graceful figure of a woman dressed in mourning—a black silhouette against all that mass of light and colour. We visit with him the Court of Don Felipe in Spain, and those few verses transport us to the Golden Century, with the poet as a Court official, leading a life between gaiety and asceticism ; an embassy to Naples, a mission to Portugal, life in Madrid, taking off his hat to Quevédo, making epigrams on Alarcón with " one Lope de Vega " supporting Góngora, making love and—finally—running the redoubtable " Conde Duque " through the body !

Anyone who takes an interest in the intensely vital literary renaissance in the Spanish-speaking world will do well to refer to the *Lirica Mexicana*. As the editors remark in the preface, people think of Mexico as a land of beautiful scenery, quaint national costumes, dialects and political vicissitudes ; it was their object to bring before the public the intellectual genius of their countrymen as a fitting commemoration of the great yearly " Festival of the Race."

BEATRICE ERSKINE.
(MRS. STUART ERSKINE.)

HOPE

THE lowliest flower is not for me,
Nor glowing fruit from Beauty's tree,

Yet dare I dream, for so it may
Chance on a shining Autumn day

Shall blow down ways of windy gold,
One wild, sweet leaf, for me to hold.

S. MARGUERITE GOODE.

POETRY FOR CHILDREN

A FRENCH critic of rare discernment and delicate wisdom, Joseph Joubert, once wrote that "*le goût est la conscience litteraire de l'âme*" ("taste is the literary conscience of the soul"). A careless and slovenly use has robbed the expression "a literary conscience" of any meaning whatever; but to the originator of the phrase it meant, obviously, intellectual sensitiveness to spiritual and eternal values. It may rightly be quoted in dealing with two new and important Anthologies of Verse for children: one compiled by that fine critic and scholar, the late Mrs. Meynell, and called *The School of Poetry* (Collins); the other put together by Mr. Philip Wayne, and introduced by Viscountess Grey, under the title *A Child's Book of Lyrics* (Methuen).

Both these volumes are sent out with a definite and highly admirable purpose. Mr. Wayne's preface declares that his intention is to give children poems which, though simple, are fit to haunt the memories of later years with beauty. Mrs. Meynell tells us that she has "taken some poems for their happy, courageous and honourable thought, some for the very poetry of poetry." In other words, each compiler has endeavoured to awaken in quite young children an intellectual sensitiveness to spiritual and eternal values—to send out the boys and girls into the realms of literature with a "literary conscience." Perhaps Mrs. Meynell's purpose is the more definitely spiritual of the two. She includes many poems of a high devotional idealism, while Mr. Wayne, for his part, concerns himself chiefly in accordance with his title, with *pure lyrics*.

The introduction to his book, by Viscountess Grey, is characteristic and delightful. She concludes it with these words: "This anthology, compiled for the service of young children, provides most adequately what we believe children require and love in lyric poetry. What can I say more than that I hope it may reach the children and bring them joy and rest?" Now, in connection with these tender words, I want to quote from a third book, *Shoes of the Wind*, by Hilda Conkling. Little Hilda is, I suppose, not much

more than twelve years old. Let us see what she has to say about it all:

I was thinking
The tenderness children need
Is in soft shadow-things:
Is a kind of magic . . .
Petals of a dark pansy . . .
Cloudy wings . . .
(But the sun can touch me
With finger-tips like flowers.)

And the tenderness children need
Is in old thoughts and songs of all the world
People have not forgotten

That seems to me extremely beautiful, and an expression of the very attribute of a child's mind so well understood and so carefully cherished by Viscountess Grey, who tells us of a little boy who "discovered *La Belle Dame Sans Merci* for himself, at the age of eight; and so great was his enthusiasm that it sent him searching through the house for his mother, that his treasure might instantly be shared." That child, evidently, was caught into the heart of the magic, the soft shadow things, and the fragrant indescribable darknesses, like pansy petals, that little Hilda found in the enchanted country which is the birthplace of poems that possess the indescribable quality of *La Belle Dame Sans Merci.*

Turning to Mrs. Meynell's volume we find she has added great value to her collection by setting at the head of many of the pieces "a little finger-post pointing to the quality." They are truly blessed little finger-posts! Who does not sigh for such in the dreary wastes of many modern reviews? It is a critic's duty to set up signposts—what else is he there for? But some reviewers of to-day are so much concerned in avoiding the snares of what they are pleased to call *clichés* that they fall into the bottomless pit of jargon. We wade wearily through adjectives apparently chosen solely for their decorative appearance in print, many of which might as well be hung, not on a lyric or a sonnet, but on a donkey's tail! Mrs. Meynell's delicate, sure phrases,

very short and simple, are just the right words in the right place. I shall refer more particularly to some of them later.

To return, for a moment, to little Hilda Conkling. Meleager, the Greek poet, when he wove his "garland" of poems, set among the crocus and laurel, the roses, mints and gilliflowers, some "early white violets" as offerings from himself. Little Hilda's verses (I must always write and think of her as "little Hilda," so great is the tenderness with which she fills me) remind us of just such flowers. Their beauty is in their whiteness, their fragrance, and their sense of a dawning spring. It is difficult to choose for quotation, but here is what she calls *The Key to My Mind:*

A little stone door in my mind
Opens and shuts with a musical sound.
There is a gold key
Locks the door;
The door is carved like lace.
Spirits fly in and out,
Messages,
Of love and things I ought to know.
Through the lace-work of stone
Comes a sweet melody saying
Happiness . . . purity . . . strangeness.

This little exquisite poem has a peculiar interest when we compare it with a paragraph in Mr. Arthur Symons's *The Romantic Movement in English Poetry*, for he speaks in the words of a critic the very same thought that falls from little Hilda in song. "The romantic movement," he says, "is simply the reawakening of the imagination, a reawakening to a sense of beauty and strangeness in natural things." There is the secret, then—the sense of *beauty and strangeness* in natural things, which is the whole essence and spirit of lyrical poetry, and which has been captured and expressed by a modern child.

I am no admirer of *vers libre*, but in *Shoes of the Wind* no other form would be natural, appropriate or even possible. To write with rhythm and rhyme requires a certain amount of intellectual craftsmanship such as no child possesses.

The poems in this volume are quick, delicate thoughts, spoken with their own cadences.

> Poems come like boats
> With sails for wings;
> Crossing the sky swiftly,
> They slip under tall bridges
> Of cloud.

It is impossible to criticise little Hilda. One can only give thanks for her. It is strange to find that many English readers know little of her books, which should, I think, be on the shelf of every child.

There are no fairies in *Shoes of the Wind*, and there are very few in Mrs. Meynell's volume. With a certain dry gravity that is somehow exceedingly attractive, she states that "we have, perhaps, found fairies a bore in poetry"; and, again, calls them "the result of a ready-made kind of fancy." She gives space to Shakespeare's elves, however, "because of his lovely fresh imagination." In this she is more tolerant than a critic of rare scholarship and eminence, the late Professor Ker, of Oxford, who declared the "conventional literary fairy tales" to be false, and quite blamed Shakespeare, Drayton and Herrick "for much artificial prettiness in a kingdom of Oberon utterly different from the sombre, splendid region, underground, within the hill." Well, Shakespeare's Oberon is certainly very different from the *Aubron* of old French poetry, who was, I suppose, his original. Thomas the Rhymer's Queen o' fair Elfland was dressed in a green silk skirt and a velvet mantle, and was so tall, gracious and comely that he mistook her for the Madonna. . . . Nor had the Greek poets any fairies of the kind Professor Ker speaks of as small (and foolish) enough to "sleep in flowers the day." In this connection it is amusing to turn to another child's book of the moment, *A Child's Garden of Verses*, by R. L. S., done into Latin by Mr. T. R. Glover. The translator of Stevenson's poems also presents us with a delightful preface, in which he admits that the conventional fairies were a great trouble to him in his task of their transplantation into the *Latin Garden*. "Stevenson's fairies," he says, "were the little people—perhaps

even smaller than the little people of Scotland. The only such persons known to Latin literature that I could remember were the Nymphs, ladies who would not float on ivy leaves, but could meet the shepherds and the fauns on one level. Œnone was more than four inches high." Mr. Glover's book should smooth the path of classical learning for many a child. They will, I am sure, find R. L. S. very much more interesting than our old friend Balbus.

Now I think I must offer a little defence of tiny fairies, for the sake of the children who really love them, as children always love the miniature. I do not quite think that Viscountess Grey would pop all the "wee people" into the flames of that bonfire she would like to feed with most modern verses written specially for children! I notice that Mr. Wayne has included Hood's poem *The Elves* in his selection. These midgets of earth-folk busy themselves delicately with moles, spiders, silkworms and bees. It is inevitable that they should appeal more to children than Milton's hairy "lubber-fiend," or even the Fairy Mab who ate the junket. By the way, I rather miss Shakespeare's Queen Mab, which is not given (no doubt from want of space) in Mrs. Meynell's anthology. This diminutive and impish sprite, galloping over a sleeping courtier's nose at midnight, in her coach made of an empty hazel nut, with a grey-coated gnat for wagoner, makes a delightful picture for a sleepy child's mind. I have a little new volume by me called *Real Fairies*, by Enid Blyton, which seems to have captured something of the tiny Queen Mab spirit, which is, of course, the inspiration of Miss Rose Fyleman. It is in *Jack Frost*, too, by Gladys Rose Goring, and in *Little Folk and Fairy Folk* by D. F. Dalston, particularly in a short poem called *Flower o' the Broom*, which describes the flowers, prettily, as fairy butterflies. After all, did not Tennyson himself write:

Winnie and Minnie
Slept in a shell.
Sleep, little ladies!
And they slept well.

Pink was the shell within,
Silver without;
Sounds of the great sea
Wandered about.

We find charming wee Winnie and Minnie in good company in a third, smaller, Anthology for Children, *A Posy of Pleasant Delights*. This is a very excellent little book ocmpiled by A. E. and W. H. D. Rouse. I must really quote another verse from a fairy poem, given by them with good reason. They say they made their book out of "what children want, which is not the same as what older persons want." This poem is by Allingham, and is called just *The Fairies:*

Up the airy mountain,
Down the rushy glen,
We dare not go a-hunting
For fear of little men.
Wee folk, good folk,
Trooping all together;
Green jacket, red cap,
And white owl's feather!

What a touch the white owl's feather gives! I have always admired Allingham's poetry, though I suppose he is hardly ever read nowadays. Perhaps twenty-first century folk will dig him up!

I notice that one of the finest of modern poets, Mr. Alfred Noyes, has a sneaking affection for little elves. In that splendid and thrilling ballad, *Sherwood*, he sings that:

All the wings of fairy land were here beneath the moon,
Like a flight of rose-leaves fluttering in a mist
Of opal and ruby and pearl and amethyst.

Sherwood! What true ringing beauty it has! We may read it, in its entirety, in *The School of Poetry;* and I, for one, should have found a difficulty in pardoning its omission, because it has qualities that are very rare and very precious to-day. It is really difficult to keep from a sort of bodily movement to what Mrs. Meynell so aptly calls "the dance of the syllables." How one can imagine a small

boy conning them over to himself, more and more joyously each minute :

Sherwood in the red dawn, is Robin Hood asleep ?

And the reply :

From the aisles of oak and ash
Rings the *Follow ! Follow !* and the boughs begin to crash
The ferns begin to flutter and the flowers begin to fly ;
And through the crimson dawning the robber band goes by.

It is impossible to mention all the beauties of the two hundred and thirty-nine poems in Mrs. Meynell's collection. I am glad to see five from George Herbert, for I believe many children would, if they knew him, love this " poet of great gravity, who yet lets his fancy play with his religious dutifulness," to quote from the little finger-post with which the compiler introduces him. Henry Vaughan, too, is well represented, and that lovely mystical singer, Thomas Traherne, of whom Mrs. Meynell writes, " He holds all the things most worth having in common with mankind—a spiritual imaginative communism." I was disappointed at first to find nothing of Christina Rossetti's. That Mrs. Meynell admired her very much one knows from writings elsewhere. However, Mr. Philip Wayne's volume makes up the lack, for he has included no less than ten poems from this gifted sister of a highly gifted man. *The Sound of the Wind* would please the very tiniest child :

The wind has such a rainy sound
Moaning through the town
The sea has such a windy sound—
Will the ships go down ?

The apples in the orchard
Tumble from their tree—
Oh, will the ships go down, go down,
In the windy sea ?

Talking of the sea brings me to *High Tide on the Coast of Lincolnshire*, Jean Ingelow's poem, which Mrs. Meynell gives, accompanied by a few words of high praise. But

even Mrs. Meynell's praise is not sufficient to satisfy me, for I think this poem—and I am speaking quite deliberately —is one of the most perfect that was ever written. It has its roots deep in the highest and simplest of human realities —as when the old mayor himself climbs the belfry tower (told in a single line) to help to ring out the chosen alarm. Then, in the fewest words possible, we get the consternation among the seabirds over what *they* knew was going to happen :

> And there was naught of strange, beside
> The flight of mews and peewits pied,
> By millions crouched on the old sea-wall.

Perhaps only a dweller by marshlands can appreciate the thrill of that. But the melody of the song of Elizabeth, " my sonne's sweet wife"; her far-off "Cusha ! Cusha ! Cusha ! " ; the love with which she inspires her husband's mother, watching her move " dark against day's golden death," where Lindis wandered among " the meads where melick groweth " ; all these things almost shake us with their musical beauty—a beauty which, as Mrs. Meynell points out, reaches its highest point in the stanza describing the inrush of the " eygre," the great wave :

> So farre, so fast the eygre drave,
> The heart had hardly time to beat,
> Before a shallow seething wave
> Sobbed in the grasses at our feet :
> The feet had hardly time to flee
> Before it brake against the knee,
> And all the world was in the sea.

It is time that Jean Ingelow was revived for children, and I am glad to see that *High Tide* is included in a most excellent American anthology, published by Stokes, under the title *The Girl's Book of Verse.* It is a book that, if I had space, I should like to quote from, with high praise.*

* Apart from more serious anthology work, a great number of volumes, full of very pleasant verses, have been produced lately for the benefit of children. Mrs. St. John Webb's book, *The Littlest*

But space forbids anything more, save the mention of a first-rate little booklet of Nursery Rhyme plays, called *The Cat and Fiddle Book*, by Lady Bell and Mrs. Herbert Richmond, which should be welcome in all nurseries where the inhabitants have a dramatic turn of mind. And I must say a word of praise for *Rainbow Lanterns*, by Emily Lewis, which has some really attractive fairies who buy "chervil laces" from a fairy pedlar who lives under the hedge.

BLANCHE WINDER.

One Again, is deservedly popular. The "Littlest One" is a very real child, with a very real childish imagination. The name of Judith Brundrett-Tweedale is attached to *Verses for Children*, another book full of sympathetic fancies; and "Chanticleer" gives us *In Fairy-Fane*, which has a little poem called *Fancy!* that is rather specially attractive. The proceeds of this volume are to be given to the support of the "Mamie" Cot in the Children's Sanatorium at Harpenden and to other named hospitals. In *Songs for Children*, by Mrs. Philip Belben, we have some nature-poems full of real feeling, especially shown in the lines entitled *Dorset*. Miss Alice Colly has also written a book of *Nature Songs for Children*. These are, I think, much above the average simple verse. *Rhymes of Little Folk*, by Burges Johnson, takes quite a line of its own, and the author gives good reasons for avoiding the allurements of misspelling and childish lisping. Many of these rhymes are really very good. I should like to add to my praise of all these a word or two of protest. A certain section of modern reviewers—one imagines them to be young men—are making rather foolish remarks about simple verses and stories written for children. Verses of this nature are quite proper reading for ordinary children, and in no way prevent the appreciation of more permanent poetry, or of classical literature. Criticism that calls them "regrettable," "sickly," or "sentimental" is only parrot-talk, and is no way justified. It is, indeed, merely made to follow the fashion of the moment.—B. W.

THE GREATER LOVE

SHE trafficked not in time or space,
Yet more than either sphere was hers
Who spanned within her heart's embrace
The spirit of the Universe.

A seraph ray she was, an eye
That pierced the troubled heart of Things,
And glowed upon our human sky
The heaven of all her visionings—

Transcending in her mystic gaze
This revelry of doom below
And dreaming into hidden ways
Of light beyond the hills of woe.

I asked her : " Art thou fairy-fond,
A child of Eden's first dispense ?
What visionest so far beyond
The measure of our earthly sense ? "

She strangely smiled, and in her smile
A Something gleamed to which I knew
All Time was but a little while
And space a narrow point of view.

I tracked her to the shoreless sea
That gathers in the waves of Time,
And then I faltered—only she
Was native in that selfless clime ;

Self-clouded I, and in my heart
Love circled but a prisoned gaze ;
In hers it was the heaven's chart
Defining God's eternal ways.

And so we parted. She put off
To shores her faith alone had seen ;
And I was left with time enough
To founder in the waves between.

CONRAD BONACINA.

THE FOUNTAIN

LITTLE fountain of dreams
The garden protects thee
For it lives in thy dreams
In thy tales of how stormy
And blue is the lake
Where, beyond in the sunlight
It sparkles defiance—
And Autumn, unheeded
Riots and flames
Pleading with Winter
(Hardened old sinner !)
To spare the wild beauty
That wantonly squanders
The gold of the beech leaves
In drifts by the fountain.

Play on, little dreamer !
Where long grow the grasses
The splash of thy raindrops
Ripples the pool
Strife that can end
In one way, and one only
Wagered in silence
Troubles the air.
Still flaunting bravely
Tawny-haired Autumn
Scorning to mourn
Her battalions of dead
Day after day
Pays the conqueror tribute
Valient in tatters of russet and red.

Only the garden
Stripped of its beauty
Mourning its roses
Eagerly hears
Tales from the fountain
That babe of the ocean
Of how the lake laughed
In the face of her fears.

OLIVE CLARE PRIMROSE.

A "GAZAL" (IN URDU)

By His Highness Mir Alinawazkhan,

Ruler of Khairpur State, India.

(*Rendered in English by Mrs. Elsa Kazi.*)

ALL turned an arid waste since I
Upon thy tenement did look,
All else effaced became since I
Upon thy lovely trace did look.

Since glance of spring the rose did greet
The " Bulbul " fond, with love replete
Not deigned to seek its old retreat,
Nor for its luring nest did look.

Within her hand be-dyed with red
She holds my life's tormented thread.
But, oh ! my heart where hath it fled
In vain for that the eyes did look.

The priest his head with worship breaks,
The " Kaaba " stone perchance he takes
For stone that firm thy threshold makes
At which at morn he rapt did look.

I upward gazed . . . but angry she
So conscious of her tyranny
Did think my eyes complainingly
For heaven's help to skies did look.

If to the idol-house I went
Or days in church or " Kaaba " spent,
I found " One " Image resident
When and where-ever I did look.

Khairpur Mirs, Sind,
November, 1923.

I.—THE GHAZAL

THE word "Ghazal" is of Arabic origin, and means, as "Taghazalu," "talking of love," specially to the fair sex. But there is another word very nearly pronounced the same way, viz., "Ghazala," which means to spin or to twist (spinning or twisting a yarn). There is no doubt in my mind that the word "Taghazal" originally was derived from this "Ghazala." Spinning a yarn or twisting a rope has suggested the idea of the latter use of the word. There is also another word, "Ghizal," known to Europe as gazelle, to which some people attribute its origin. But if it is not derived from it (as it is most probably not), the leaps of a gazelle have much in common with the poetic flights of the "ghazal" writer.

It is a form of lyric poetry widely used in post-Islamic Persian literature and later on as widely used in Urdu, the literary language of Hindustan. It consists of, the least, five or as many as twenty couplets or more put together—*e.g.*, Hafiz, the most well-known Persian Ghazal composer, has from five to seventeen couplets in his Ghazals. It is written in meters of all lengths, the necessity being that both the verses of the first couplet must "rhyme" with each other, and then the last verses of the succeeding couplets must rhyme with these two, the rhyme, or Kafia, as it is called, being the same throughout.

In some Ghazals, in addition to this "Kafia" or rhyme, the verse ends with an additional word always following the rhyme. This must continuously be the same word, in one sense making a double rhyme; with this difference, that, unlike rhyme, it is always the very same word repeating itself. This is called "Radif"—*e.g.*, the first two verses of a Ghazal, instead of ending with "heart" and "dart," would end with "heart mine" and "dart mine," and the last verses of the succeeding couplets would end as "smart mine," "part mine," and so on, thus bringing in the "rhyme" word, and in addition a word that would continue the same throughout, these two being called "Kafia" and "Radif" respectively.

In the beginning there used to be a logical connection

between the couplets of a Ghazal. But later on it developed along different lines, and by the time it had attained its " golden age " this logical connection between the couplets had disappeared. Now, and even in Hafiz's Ghazals, the apparent relation of the different couplets of a Ghazal to each other is that of pearls strung on a string and yet each standing apart and by itself ; not like a gold chain which is obviously beaten out of one piece.

European writers generally translate the word " Ghazal " as ode. This is true only so far that ode originally meant " a song " to the Greek, also that " Ghazal " is a form of lyric poetry, as is " ode." But " Ghazal " is neither a classic ode nor a modern ode as far as the " form " is concerned.

Some translators call it an amatory " sonnet." To those who know what a " sonnet " originally was it is a tautology, because " sonnet " was a lyric form used only for amatory subjects. Thus Ghazal is a sonnet only so far that invariably it deals, or it ought to deal, with " love," but in no other respect is it a sonnet. More than these two, it has likeness with " Song " of English literature. Thomas Moore's lyrics have more in common with " Ghazals " than anything else. What is much more worth mentioning is that as songs and hymns were and are invariably set to music and sung, so Ghazals were and are set to music for singing.

And as later on in European poetry (which undoubtedly was inspired as much by Greek as other Oriental poetry), so earlier, the Oriental authors and poets made two departments of verse, sacred and profane, religious and secular. As Europeans wrote hymns and songs (hymn merely meaning a sacred song), so the Oriental poets wrote " Ghazals " on God and the prophets and Ghazals on their lady loves. But as some in latter European poetry, so many more amongst the Oriental poets (long before) perceived that the demarcation was an arbitrary and an undesirable one, that in reality no such barrier existed, that this duality was only caused by sheer lack of clear vision, that earth was not an antonym of heaven, but a

heaven in embryo, that father in heaven was also father in earth. It was these who amalgamated these two departments of lyric poetry and wrote odes and songs and Ghazals which treated of earthly and heavenly in one and swept away the imaginary barrier set up by the tradition of the less-seeing poets. Donne, Crashaw, Waller are some of these in formation. Although they still to a certain extent, when less inspired, owed allegiance and paid homage to the old forms, they no doubt pioneer the change. It is just the school that Dr. Johnson called "metaphysical."

The same variety existed in the East, but in a much larger number, almost making nine-tenths of the whole number of the well-known poets. These are called "the mystic poets." The omnipresence and omnipotence of "God of Love" to them was a matter too plain for words. There is no duality in their vision. The love of the "Seen" and the love of the "Unseen" to them are only two phases of the same "love," only one more advanced. The love of their earthly beloved only a passage to the love of God, the earth only an echo of heaven and a stage to heaven. All is divine. There is no profanity whatsoever. The only profanity lies in this, that one should consider anything profane and not sacred or God's. They recognise the love of the "outer" and love of the "inner," but "outer" and "inner" of the same object and that object the omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient God.

This class chiefly preferred "Ghazal" as the vehicle for their expression, as it was no doubt pre-eminently suited to their requirements. It was chiefly they who by and by gave it the present significance. It was also they who made the obvious logical connection of the couplets not only unnecessary but a thing not to be preferred. They required latitude of expression, as the matter they expressed was, to say the least, enigmatical and mysterious. They did not care for so much liberty with form as with content.

"Metaphysical" on one hand and "mystic" on the other are a bit similar in this, that they both own reflective and contemplative minds. It is they who link distant

objects widely separated in space by their quick flight of imagination and form broad generalisations and hold analogies with a vaster grasp. They are now on earth and now in heaven. There is no barrier to them insuperable, such as to those who cannot fly.

The ode writer reflected on one subject, broke off with stereotyped forms, and yet could and did keep the logical sequence. The Ghazal writer, on the other hand, contemplated the whole in a detached mood, broke away even with the trammels of thought and logic (or the links of ordinary conception), and carried on the contemplation of the abstract almost in a trance like self-unconsciousness. He dreamt rather than thought or reflected ; one attribute suggested another without effort or conscious thought ; from suggestion to suggestion, from idea to idea, he flew so far till the particular mood did carry his mind along and was exhausted. These suggestions he put down in verse, strung like pearls on a thread, without apparently hammering a golden chain out of the same wire. The link being not a " logical " but " psychological " one, the sorrow suggesting tears, tears their source the heart. Then, the analogies suggested by these. But all as parts of one " mood," not as so many objects, but attributes or ideas, there being no limitations, no boundaries, no barriers hindering such contemplation of the " universal." To repeat, there is sequence, but instead of a logical one it is a psychological one. There is unity, too, but not of a " subject of thought," but of " mood."

Thus the " Mystic Ghazal " treats of " contemplative moods," when the mind, liberated from limitations of conscious thought, " goeth where it listeth," the object being the all-pervading unity, the " diversity " being there as the material to weave out the idea, and to feel at the end the inevitable oneness. All diverse objects and ideas are brought under the all-pervading " mood " that dotes on the Universal and the Unique. The " Ghazal " thus boasts to be after the pattern of " nature " itself, in which diversity and variety exist under one all-pervading unity, without any apparent link. The mystic " Ghazal " writer delights in

expressing himself in logical contrarieties, only to show that logic stands lower. The logic would enunciate " that a thing cannot be and not be " at the same time. The mystic would say " I am nothing." " Am " and " nothing " means am and am not. Even much more boldly he challenges logic by saying that although he " is," yet " he is not." Thus, in two words, he loves to play on " contraries." As in the " Ghazal," by His Highness the Ruler of Khairpur State, which we have the privilege of publishing in this number, the opening lines read :

" All turned an arid waste since I
Upon thy tenement did look."

Now " waste " and " tenement " are the words in original, as two contraries : " tenement " is habitation, and the other is uninhabited waste.

This line (leaving aside the beauty of expression that lies in bringing two contraries in the compass of one verse suggests the attribute of love that brings about the " detachment " necessary to conceive the universal and so dear to a mystic, and also expresses the idea that when the " Reality " is perceived nothing appears real beside it. Yet it has the obvious meaning that " since I saw thy house I can see nothing else," as addressed to the earthly beloved, the house having again several mystic inferences, body being also a house of the spirit. The same way the words in the succeeding line, " effacement " and " trace." Its place as the initiatory verse is explained by this, that it emphasises the psychological conditions *sine qua non* for the search after the divine, viz., all-absorbing love, the self-forgetfulness and the detachment that that love engenders.

It may not be uninteresting if I say a few words how the following couplets, though apparently and logically looking independent of the first, are linked as parts of one contemplative mood to each other.

The succeeding couplet only carries the argument further by an illustration from nature. The first line, even, is not redundant. The " spring " greeting the rose has mystic allusion to the eternal night of " chaos " and " creation." The " bulbul " is the nightingale that falls in love with the

" rose " only after the rose is looked at by the spring; the " coming-in-being " of love thus is made dependent on the greeting that the rose received from spring—*i.e.*, Beauty coming into being first. But since the nightingale fell in love, it did not deign to look at her old retreat and the old joys. All else is forgotten but the one object that is loved.

The third couplet looks still less connected with the second. But in truth it is suggested by the second. As " bulbul," so *I* am entirely at the beloved's mercy—all flies and goes to the beloved, nothing really is mine, not even my heart and my life. I have lost the heart, and my being stands enthralled and entirely at the mercy of the beloved. Be-dyed with red suggests " Henna " and yet blood. This line illustrates how love " earthly " and love " heavenly " are on one plane, by making the same language express them both and how both bring in the same psychological changes in the spirit and fit the being for detachment and self-forgetfulness, the necessary things for " losing this life " to gain the " eternal."

The fourth couplet makes this meaning more clear, and is suggested by the preceding one—that though a pious man may keep all rituals, nothing would help if he does not " love " the object of his worship. Here also the words stone, and " breaking " of " the head," the " threshhold stone," and " Kaába " stone are brought side by side, as they do not only sound pretty but have a real correspondence. It merely means that whatever we may do is actually inspired by " love."

The fifth likewise is suggested by the preceding line, and is part and parcel of the same mood. It explains first (leaving aside its obvious allusion, which is plain), that intentions are not actions, that looking up to heaven does not mean looking for heaven. It also suggests the idea that the devotee who loves does never complain of whatever treatment he receives from the beloved; that our complaints and grumblings are because we cannot see the one who sends (even what we call) pain, and do not love Him, or else even the tyranny of an earthly beloved is sweet rather

than bitter. Could we see the Eternal Beauty and the beauty of His design, we are sure to love. The moment we love we cannot curse but only bless. The last couplet explains itself. It is the culminating point of the whole mood. In clearer terms it says that Unity prevails under all diversity, that forms do not matter; that he saw and sees only One and the same everywhere and always.

Here it may be mentioned that the translator has made a quartette out of a couplet. But throughout two verses represent one verse of the original. The rhyming arrangement is also English, although great care has been taken to retain the last word—*i.e.*, "Radif" and the peculiar wording that really matters. In introducing oriental poetry to the readers of THE POETRY REVIEW I do not think there could be anything more representative than this most popular form in Persian and Urdu poetry and a composition of a modern Ruler of State, replete with all the beauties of the ancients.

Khairpur Mirs, J. J. KAZI.
November, 1923.

THE POET OUT OF LOVE

THE curtain falls.
The footlights flicker down
And all the folk go quietly away.
O painted poet-clown,
You did not please them with your jests to-day.

You did not sing,
Nor sigh with tender passion,
There was no mirth behind your nimble quips.
Why do you seek to fashion
The tired dreams of love with bitter lips?

Folk will not come
Who cannot laugh nor cry
At poets out of love and clowns in tears.
New loves are soon come by,
New drolleries to trick the aching years.

AUDREY WRAUGHAM.

PIGEONS AND PEACOCKS

BEHIND me, in the sapphire gloom,
The shadows fill my silent room—
And, set in the purple of the night,
My candle burns a topaz light—
A steady flame to scare away
The shapes that come not there by day
To waver, tremulous and dread,
On the painted screen that guards my bed.
Still in the window seat I stay,
And see the milky moth-wing sway
The milkier phlox beneath its weight ;
And hear, beyond the spinney gate,
The drowsy pigeons faintly call,
Grey ghosts above the garden wall.
The birches, whispering of rain,
Murmur : " She will come again "—
They sigh of some White Lady who
Paced the path 'twixt box and ewe
Twice two hundred years ago.
They say she still goes and fro
Along the lime walk, pleachéd deep,
Mysteriously her pale skirts sweep,
And ever stepping at her side
Two white peacocks proudly glide.
. . . The birch leaves shiver : faint I see
A fleeting flash of ivory,
A swirl of skirts against the wet
Green dusk of dew-drenched mignonette ;
Proud peacocks poised—a vivid white
Staining the purple of the night.

The rain is falling ; pigeons call
Drowsily from the spinney wall.
My eyelids droop. My dreams shall be
Of peacocks carved in ivory.
The candle burns a topaz light
Set in the sapphire gloom of night.

MARION ALLISON.

WHEN I AM OLD

WHEN I am old, and willing to forget,
The candle of my life will flicker low,
Lighting the faces that I used to know,
With one last effort, one faint, shuddering jet.

The grease will drop from candle to my hand
—Oh, let vain tears my girlhood used to cry!
The song of the blue-flame will be "Good-bye.
I failed to light the things your heart had planned.

"Fame, beauty, recognition, were your ends,
But my faint luminance lit none of these,
Only the eyes of One you used to please,
Only the laughing lips of your few friends.

"My light has shown no wreath of laurels fair
No golden name upon a blazoned page,
Only a love that mellowed with your age,
Only a little thing as light as air.

"When from my dying flame the smoke-wreaths rise,
You'll cry out 'Who is left that understands?'
And out into the night will reach dear hands,
And in my lightless failure shine dear eyes."

PHŒBE FENWICK PAGE.

A MEMORY

SHE sat where rays of mellow light
Slanted across her burnished hair,
In holy song she took delight,
She bowed her head in prayer.

The sun streams in as heretofore,
And hymns are sung and prayers are said;
But she, who erstwhile worshipped there—
My love—is long since dead.

B. ANNAKIN.

DREAMING FORWARD

TO-DAY I am dreaming forward, but I know that a time must come
When I shall dream back;
To-day there is magic abroad, and laughter and love at home,
And stars when the night is black.

And I would not have life's magic with my withering youth-time die,
Nor the laughter fade:
I would keep God's gift of love, and gaze on a midnight sky
With eternal stars inlaid.

Then to-day no more of dreaming—I must work while the years are young,
That my hands may build
Dear dreams for the after-time when the songs shall all be sung
And the sound and action stilled.

To-day I am dreaming forward, but how soon will this bright to-day
Be buried for me!
And my eyes, grown old, shall watch old stars that burn their way
Through the sky of memory.

NANCY POLLOK.

TO A DEAD CHILD

O LITTLE child, I waited many days
For you, and dreamed strange, foolish dreams.
They all are withered now; for child, it seems,
God missed you when you left His high bright ways,
He called you back, and I am left alone.
Yet—nought beside you ever gave me love,
While, in His holy, boundless realms above,
Thousands of angels praise Him round the Throne.

M. W.

BENEDICTION

IF, any time, you should be made aware
Of unaccustomed brightness in the day,
So that, regenerate and glad, you say,
" How good it is to live—how sweet the air "—
If, on a sudden, strains of music rare
From myriad muted strings, across your way
Should send a passing rapture, and delay
Your steps, awhile, as you pause, listening there—
O you may know it is my thought of you
Outflung like censer'd incense on the wind—
Memory's Rosemary—but not its Rue—
And Love's own Song, that wings from mind to mind.
And Ancient Wrongs, lull'd by Oblivion's spell
Lie slumbering at last—I wish you well.

C. MARTIN SHROBYNG.

MERRIE GENTLEMEN

THE little Bethlehem lamps are lit, the Eve is fallen fair,
For these who hailed the Star with us, who hath any care ?
For these who kept the feast with us, now feasting otherwhere ?

. . . . .

But up and down the ringing road, along the rimy lane,
A hand to every latticed gate, a call to every pane
A ghostly, gallant company, they storm the town again.

So now by ruddy kindled fire, by holly-circled sill,
By frosted wood and bannered park, I hear them riding still,
To hail the little town again with tidings of good will.

For this from Uriel's house hath come, and this from Michael's hall,
And this on Gabriel's splendid horn hath learned a splendid call,
And one I know, with shining spurs, rides swiftest of them all.

And one in silver armour is, and one in purple dressed,
And one has raised a gilded helm, and one a plumèd crest,
And one I know, with folded wings, comes softer than the rest.

Now lightly over mead and moor, now sweet by croft and ling,
From end to end the little town the happy mummers sing,
From nave and stall and carven choir the folk are carolling.

And swift and soft beneath the stars the ghostly riders come,—
And some from Paradise have fared, from Eden-garden some,
To keep the merry feast of Yule beside the hearths of home.

Oh, fair and far, in heaven's court, the seraph multitude,
Have turned a wreath of golden stars to crown a golden rood,
But some be back to earth again, of Christ's young brotherhood.

. . . . .

The little Bethlehem lamps are lit, the Eve is fallen fair,
For these who hailed the Star with us, who hath any care?
For these who kept the feast with us, now feasting otherwhere?

FRANCES BEATRICE TAYLOR.

London, Ontario.

THE PLAQUE

SYMBOL of sacrifice, that tear dimmed eyes
Scarce see, yet see beyond to hallowed ground,
In foreign fields wherein some loved one lies.
Proudly we mourn our dead. Who hears the sound
Of stifled weeping in the silent night?

GEOFFREY ARDEN GIBBS.

THE DYNAMICS OF AMERICAN POETRY—III

BY ALICE HUNT BARTLETT

GEORGE SANTAYANA—EDWIN ARLINGTON ROBINSON—BERNICE LESBIA KENYON—WILBERT SNOW—GENEVIENE TAGGARD

WHEN an author has achieved world-fame as the writer of such monumental works in philosophy and psychology as George Santayana has done in *The Life of Reason*, *The Sense of Beauty*, *Winds of Doctrine*, and *Interpretation of Poetry and Religion*, one feels that his expression of opinion regarding which of his poems he considers best, and why, is another distinct contribution to the Dynamics of American Poetry.

I say "another" because Santayana made many contributions to the dynamics of American poetry during the twenty-two years he was at Harvard. As Professor of Philosophy he commanded attention and had the moulding of thought of hundreds of students, and thus influenced those who graduated from Harvard in the years 1889–1911, while he was teaching philosophy there, many of our Harvard poets having been influenced by his teachings and writings. It was while at Harvard that he published *Interpretations of Poetry and Religion* (1900), *The Life of Reason* (in five volumes) (1905–06), *Three Philosophical Poets—Lucretius, Dante and Goethe* (1910).

Having read Santayana's profound writings, and having at hand *Poems* (Scribner's) for review, I awaited with eager anticipation for Mr. Santayana's expression of choice in this latest book. Fortunately, Santayana is one of those rare writers who define their thoughts and explain their aims and the foundations upon which they base their conclusions. Emerson, who said, "He is like a god to me who defines and divines," and Milton, and the other great masters of thought who prized definition and clarity, would delight in reading Santayana's preface to this last book of poems. He confides to the reader that:

A Muse—not exactly an English Muse—actually visited me in my isolation; the same, or a ghost of the same, that visited

Boethius or Alfred de Musset or Leopardi. It was literally impossible for me then not to re-echo her eloquence. When that compulsion ceased, I ceased to write verses. My emotion—for there was genuine emotion—faded into a sense that my lesson was learned and my troth plighted. . . .

As to the subject of these poems it is simply my philosophy in the making.

Would that more poets would be so frank as to tell us why they write, what they write, and what influences bear upon their writings, as Santayana does in the following lines:

I never drank in childhood the homely cadences and ditties which in pure spontaneous poetry set the essential key. I know no words redolent of the wonder-world, the fairy-tale, or the cradle. Moreover, I am city bred, and that companionship with nature, those rural notes, which for English poets are almost inseparable from poetic feeling, fail me altogether. Landscape to me is only a background for fable or a symbol for fate, as it was to the ancients; and the human scene itself is but a theme for reflection. Nor have I been tempted into the by-ways even of towns, or fascinated by the aspect and humours of all sorts and conditions of men. My approach to language is literary, my images are only metaphors. . . .

Here is Santayana's answer to the natural question of what he thinks of free versing:

Verse is one of the traditions of literature. Like the orders of Greek architecture, the sonnet or the couplet or the quatrain are better than anything else that has been devised to serve the same function; and the innate freedom of poets to hazard new forms does not abolish the freedom of all men to adopt the old ones.

Santayana's answer to my letter asking which of his poems he prefers follows:

Your letter is not altogether easy to answer. A psycho-analyst might perhaps discover which of my own poems I like best, but on consulting my consciousness for the first time on this point, after some hesitation, I should say the translations, especially those from Michael Angelo (of which there are more than those in the collection). Both the originals and my versions of them run through my head more often than any other verses. If you had asked me which of my poems I like *least*, I would easily have replied, the early ones and those quoted in pious anthologies. I should have left out the

earliest sonnets altogether if they had not been necessary to the series and as documents of sincerity.

There are some doubts in my mind about my Americanism: perhaps I ought to warn you that I have never been an American citizen. As to my right to figure among American poets, you are a better judge than I.

The favourite sonnet follows:

FROM MICHAEL ANGELO.

"NON SO SE S'È LA DESIATA LUCE."

I know not if from uncreated spheres
Some longed-for ray it be that warms my breast
Or lesser light, in memory expressed,
Of some once lovely face, that reappears,
Or passing rumour ringing in my ears,
Or dreamy vision, once my bosom's guest,
That left behind I know not what unrest,
Haply the reason of these wayward tears.
But what I feel and seek, what leads me on,
Comes not of me; nor can I tell aright
Where shines the hidden star that sheds this light.
Since I beheld thee, sweet and bitter fight
Within me. Resolution have I none.
Can this be, Master, what thine eyes have done?

In Sonnet XXIX Santayana has compressed sufficient essence of philosophy to fill volumes in a more expanded style:

What riches have you that you deem me poor,
Or what large comfort that you call me sad?
Tell me what makes you so exceeding glad:
Is your earth happy or your heaven sure?
I hope for heaven, since the stars endure
And bring such tidings as our fathers had.
I know no deeper doubt to make me mad,
I need no brighter love to keep me pure.
To me the faiths of old are daily bread;
I bless their hope, I bless their will to save,
And my deep heart still meaneth what they said.
It makes me happy that the soul is brave,
And, being so much kinsman to the dead,
I walk contented to the peopled grave.

One would like to read a sonnet from Santayana's pen, amplifying his dicta that

> Everything ideal has a natural basis and everything natural has an ideal development.
>
> Existence itself is not a good, but only an opportunity.

Plato, Aristotle, and the other masters of philosophy since them never did better, nor can we think of anybody who ever expressed so clearly and briefly such aphorisms, which can be used in everyday life, in practically every walk of life.

* * *

Edward Arlington Robinson had included in his *Collected Poems* (Macmillan) his earliest volumes, including *A Man against the Sky*, *The Children of the Night*, *The Town Down the River*, *Lancelot*, *The Three Taverns* and *Avon's Harvest*, making a monumental volume of close to six hundred pages of solidly thought out dreams, some in rhyme, some in blank verse, mostly adhering to the established and respected form. This collection supplies material for a lengthy review.

But although Harvard was Robinson's *alma mater*, and he may be considered a contemporary of Santayana, he has not acquired the latter's liberal inclination to reveal himself to the readers as Santayana does.

How may one express a preference in such wealth as is offered in Robinson's book. I thought the author would help me in selecting, while revealing his own preference. His letter, which follows, is characteristic of Mr. Robinson's reserve :

> While I am very glad to know that you are to review my book, I must beg to evade your request for my personal opinion as to what poem in it is the best. Possibly I am the last person to know. Therefore I prefer to give you an entirely free hand in the matter.
>
> As for unpublished poems, I'm sorry to say that I have nothing on hand, and consequently have been obliged to say so to several editors who have been good enough to ask me for something.

I will supplement his letter with his sonnet, which reveals at least Robinson's views regarding poets and poetry :

Oh for a poet—for a beacon bright
To rift this changeless glimmer of dread grey ;
To spirit back the Muses, long astray,
And flush Parnassus with a newer light ;
To put these little sonnet-men to flight
Who fashion, in a shrewd mechanic way,
Songs without souls, that flicker for a day,
To vanish in irrevocable night.

What does it mean, this barren age of ours ?
Here are the men, the women, and the flowers,
The seasons, and the sunset, as before.
What does it mean ? Shall there not one arise
To wrench one banner from the western skies,
And mark it with his name forever more ?

To better understand the underlying feelings of this master poet of ours, we must read his *Credo :*

I cannot find my way ; there is no star
In all the shrouded heavens anywhere ;
And there is not a whisper in the air
Of any living voice but one so far
That I can hear it only as a bar
Of lost imperial music, played when fair
And angel fingers wove, and unaware,
Dead leaves to garlands where no roses are.

No, there is not a glimmer, not a call,
For one that welcomes, welcomes when he fears,
The black and awful chaos of the night ;
For through it all—above it all—
I know the far-sent message of the years,
I feel the coming glory of the Light.

Robinson is not possessive in his tendencies. He does not grab the universe to report its wonders. He is not egocentric and does not feel exalted when he contemplates the wonders surrounding us. Instead he soberly writes ; more with resignation than relief :

MOMUS.

"Where's the need of singing now?"—
Smooth your brow,
Momus, and be reconciled,
For King Kromos is a child—
Child and father,
Or god rather,
And all gods are wild.

"Who reads Byron any more?"—
Shut the door,
Momus, for I feel a draught;
Shut it quick for someone laughed—
"What's become of
Browning? Some of
Wordsworth lumbers like a raft?"

"What are poets to find here?"
Have no fear:
When the stars are shining blue
There will yet be left a few
Themes availing—
And these failing,
Momus, there'll be you.

How different this is from Santayana's own views and philosophy!

The only similarities, if we may call them such, are revealed by their statements that they do not have original unpublished poems on hand—which probably means that the demand for their poems is greater than their output—we certainly hope that it does not mean that their muses have deserted them, leaving Santayana in possession of a cosmic philosophy and Robinson with a desolate outlook!

* * *

Bernice Lesbia Kenyon, author of *Songs of Unrest* (Charles Scribner's), among the younger American poets, whose poetic play *The Alchemist* won the Masefield Poetry Prize, writes:

As to what poems I consider best in the volumes, that is one of the hardest questions possible to the writer of a book. I suppose everyone likes some things best at one time and others at another.

That is true of me, at any rate. I really don't know which poem is best. Reviewers have shown me already that the taste in such choices is different with every reviewer. All I can do is fall back on averages. Mr. William Crary Brownell and Mr. Edgar Lee Masters both agree on the long sequence *Interim* as the most powerful and moving, as well as the best. Others pick lyrics, of which the favourites seem to be *Incoherence*, *I Go Singing*, *Vain Lady*, *Nocturne*, and some others. Of sonnets, *Homecoming in Storm*, *Palimpsest*, *City Rain*, *Premonition* and *Ancestry* and *Defiance*, with a lot of others. My own preference ranges among these mentioned, but just where varies with the moment and the audience.

You ask whether I think making a poet name his own best work is a wise or successful way. My answer would be: If the poet can name a preference he ought to be fairly right. But I doubt if many of us could. Isn't it safer for you to name what you think would be a British preference, since it's for a British journal? * Another thing, don't you think it's hard for a new public to judge of the work of any poet by one selected poem? I do. I don't believe it can be done fairly. Better, perhaps, might be to quote a selection of short passages, illustrating the poet's range. I am not speaking of my own work merely, but of that of all of us. Pardon the frankness of this letter. Your question made me think, and the results of that thinking were various.

So many people want to know what I mean by "unrest" in the title of my book. I hasten to explain that it's youth's unrest and *not* social unrest!

The last paragraph expresses the motif which is echoed through a number of her poems. The opening poem, *Security*, mocks at the feeling of unrest, but only for the nonce, the second, *Unrest*, expresses "youth's unrest" definitely:

UNREST.

Books I would read, but must go unread,
And music be unheard, and lands unseen;
Fragments of learning only, one may glean;
And love itself, though brightly faceted,
Flashes a narrow fire whose flame has led
Each in a separate way. And this has been
And will be for all time. There is no mean

* But not exclusively British; say, rather, a periodical for English-speaking people.—Ed.

Nor centre where all things are sung and said.
Now in the time of youth why must I feel
Life's narrowness ; and, uncontent with you,
Struggle to break it, searching in all lands
For every glimpse of living they reveal ? . . .
Make me forget, and drift an hour or two,
While the whole world lies quiet in your hands.

The City Dweller treats the same motif in a different mood, philosophically :

THE CITY DWELLER.

These things I cannot forget : far snow in the night,
The shadows of hills and the leaping beauty of flame,
Wind-scattered leaves, and the patterns of birds in flight,
And the changing thunderous sea that is never the same.

Oh, high are the city walls, and the houses tall,
And only the sky remains of beautiful things,
And there never is time to search for the sky at all,
Lest there pass above me the changing pattern of wings.

But youth, clear youth that breathes in my breath to-day,
Chants in my blood that ancient beauty is young ;
And sees far snow in the lamp-lit snow of my way,
And shadows of hills where the long wall-shadows are flung.

And flaming fire is lit by the million lights,
And blown smoke gathers as birds, or as leaves wind-free ;
And, oh, if your eyes are closed in the clamorous nights,
The motion of men resounds like the thundering sea !

* * *

Wilbert Snow, the author of *Maine Coast* (Harcourt, Brace and Co.), agrees with many other poets that choosing from one's poems is difficult. He writes :

Permit me to thank you for your letter and for the nice things you say of *Maine Coast*. It is difficult to tell which of the poems in *Maine Coast* I like best. 'Tis like asking a mother of five children which child she likes best. Some days I prefer one and some days another.

Carl Van Dorn, whose opinion I hold very high, writes me: "The most 'poetical' and haunting poem is *Haunted*; the most elevated and flawless is *The Eagle; Olof* is the best character work; *Autumn's Country* is your best argument."

Other people take a different view. Of forty books that I have autographed here in Middletown, thirty people have expressed a preference for *Mail Time*. A few others prefer the *Paving Quarry*, and a number of grim realists prefer *Country Funeral*. Personally, I think I like spots in several of the poems. But I would be hard put to it if I were compelled to pick out one for an anthology. I would like to know which ones you like best.

I agree with Carl Van Dorn and *The Eagle* is my preference. I quote the first and second stanzas:

THE EAGLE.

A hundred king-birds flying near our ship
On Fundy's Bay becalmed, one glassy morning,
When white sails quivered and the reefpoints flapped,
Could not as much as stir the drowsy crew,
Swabbing down decks and parching in the sun,
To lift their eyes above the galley stove-pipe
Till, from the North, a grim, bald-headed eagle
Swooped in among the flock exultingly,
Causing a flutter, as a great world figure
Bestirs an audience that has waited hours.
The king-birds swarmed about and heckled him,
Setting is all blood-hot to take his part;
And when the heckling grew so violent
They clung to him as barnacles to rocks,
In ever-widening circles up he soared
With scores of groundlings darting in his wake.
We watched them, baffled, drop off one by one;
Now twelve were left; now five; now only three;
And, finally, with one victorious wheel,
He thrust his golden wings through the yielding blue,
Till heights divided his majestic being
From birds that never knew the upper air.

From spellbound admiration we tore loose
And cheered him as we would a racing yacht
Defeating rivals in the piping breeze.

The student who seeks in the works of American poets expression indicative of the characteristic regional dynamic forces which the poet can summon in the making of poetry descriptive of American places will find in Mr. Snow's book a wealth of material, principally about New England, but also about other states, as in the first stanza of *The Return :*

> His wanderings in Western states were wide :
> He knew the velvet greens of Oregon,
> The deep rich blues of Crater and Tahoe,
> The splendour of the Rocky Mountain peaks,
> The sun-burned Arizona mesas stretched
> In far-flung, weird, fantastic pageantry ;
> The fragrance of the desert sage at dawn,
> The blood red sunsets on the Great Salt Lake,—
> He knew and loved them all. And yet the soil,
> The harsh New England soil, was calling him,
> And would not give him peace till he resolved
> To write the old folks he was coming back.

This impresses one with the great natural varieties America offers, but with Mr. Snow's skill we are not surprised to find ourselves crossing the American continent seeing and experiencing only :

> A dreary week across the continent,
> With sooty cars, and jangling engine shrieks,
> Monotony of cornfields and delays,
> Then four glad miles between him and his home.

The next four lines make you forget any regrets you may have had of having left the colourful West for New England :

> October's wine-like air caressed his cheek,
> Wine-coloured leaves clung to the maple trees,
> And out across the east the sun came up
> Turning to wine the pearl-grey wastes of sea.

* * *

Our interest is more than aroused when a poet of George Sterling's unquestioned leadership speaks of a book of poems as he speaks of Geneviene Taggard's book *For Eager Lovers :*

"It is all sheer stuff, webs of dreams as strong as steel wire, and vital fabrics as softly lustrous, in certain lights, as the silk of Keats. I can think of no poem in the book that any poet should not be proud to have written."

After such an introduction we are eager to know which poem or poems the author prefers. Miss Taggard's selection is, therefore, doubly interesting. She writes :

Thank you for your letter. I will list my poems in the order of merit and affection if you like, thus :

With Child	*First Miracle*
Boys and Girls	*Everyday Alchemy*
Enamel Girl	*Talking Water*
Ice Age	*Dead Man*

Being privileged to do so, I select *Ice Age*, which is a poetic treatment of the cosmogony of the universe, as will be noted from the following excerpts :

ICE AGE.

Noiselessly the planets will blow by,
Like smoke, like breath, like driven snow ;
Frost-bitten suns on on, on on will blow ;
Over earth's curve, the moons, like birds, will fly.
Making no noise and only vague shadow.

And spiker snow will spin and spin
A tangle of frost to snare earth in.
Little earth, then,
Will house few men :
Little earth, shrunken—
No longer drunken
Purple, splendid, roistering earth ;
Little earth hung
With pearls of seas,
Little earth shivering,
About to freeze.

And through her veins, caught in this web,
Life and colour and sound will ebb.

There will be faint tints, none
From the centre of the sun.
There will be light noises, no
Sound harsher than snow.

Never a sound of thunder or river,
Torrent or stone—
Only vague breath from the old life-giver,
Making her own
Final, lingering filigree
Of frost, blown
On the glass of the sky, in planet and tree
On icicle moon, a torrent and three
Glittering stars half-grown ;
A slight tone
Rippling sound into the stilling river,
The crisp sea.

And spider snow will spin and spin
A tangle of cold to catch earth in.

My next preference is *Sea Change :*

You are no more, but sunken in a sea
Sheer into dream, ten thousand leagues, you fell ;
And now you lie green-golden, while a bell
Swings with the tide, my heart : and all is well
Till I look down, and wavering, the spell—
Your loveliness—returns. There in the sea,
Where you lie amber-pale and coral-cool,
You are most loved, most lost, most beautiful.

ALICE HUNT BARTLETT.

NURSERY NOCTURNE

THE stars have netted the sea to-night,
The lights in the harbour wobble.
Wouldn't it be a great delight
To row in the new moon-coble*
To the Lullay Islands : just we two
And all night long we'd fish
With a comet for bait and a line night-blue
For a slippery, silvery wish :
We'd take it to folk who never have caught
A silvery wish or a golden thought !

DOROTHY UNA RATCLIFFE.

* A little fishing boat.

SONNETS BY HENRY GRAFTON CHAPMAN

The author of these sonnets, Henry Grafton Chapman, the brother of the noted American poet and essayist, John Jay Chapman (author of *Emerson and Other Essays, Songs and Poems*, and other works), left upon his death a number of unpublished poems, including a series of sonnets, from which the following are selected.

I.

YOU have been spendthrift of such priceless things
That when you vowed you'd spend far more on me
I put myself the question: Can there be
Aught there, that has not long since taken wings
And left her bankrupt? But a day that brings
Wealth such as yesterday you flung with free
Extravagance, not the exhaustless sea
Can equal in a tempest, when it flings
Wave after wave against a thirsty shore.
And now I have to ask: What had she thought
To have of me, at such unvalued price
That, where I doubted I should find no more
To pay me, I must pawn my soul for aught
To square a hundredth of those ecstasies.

II.

Remember, love, thy lover in the day
That is for me my youth; or ever, dear,
The evil days come not, not yet the year
Draw nigh to us, when You and I shall say
We have no pleasure in them. Do not loose,
I beg you, yet awhile, the silver cord
That binds me to you. Can you yet afford
To break the golden bowl we daily use?
Or at the fountain of our joy to break
The pitcher? At our cisterned happiness
To break the wheel? But of each precious trust
I charge you, dearest lady, that you take

Exceeding care, lest youth and thoughtlessness
Shatter these priceless treasures in the dust.

III.

Since I must die, and since the dead rise not,
And the too childish faith preposterous
Of them that fought with beasts at Ephesus
Has profited them nothing, I have thought
To count each day a day in heaven that brought
A sight of you, and wisely have I thus
Culled ten eternal years from glorious
To-days, and left eternity unsought,
For better were the world if all could see
Their lives as I have seen my days with you
Nor waste the precious moments ere they die
In thinking after death happy to be—
But they've not you to perfect what is true,
So I'll not blame them if they love their lie.

IV.

Flatter I might, and say I cannot tell
Your beauty from my love of your dear face;
Praise you I could, and say I cannot trace
Your doings, for that all you do is well;
Bluster I might, I was within your spell,
Say each your motion, if you move, is grace—
Your soul more deep than time, wider than space,
Your eyes from heaven, your voice a silver bell—
All this I will not say, tho' it be so:—
Your face is beauty, what you do is right,
Grace is your motion, what you say is truth
That is not knowledge that you do not know;
You wake, and it is day; you sleep, 'tis night;
And age, if age you have, is ever youth.

INSOMNIA

O LITTLE boats of Capri
That fish a mile from town
And nick the dark with torches
Till heaven is upside-down,

I may forget these brown warm eyes,
These brown throats as they turn,
These girls with burdens on their heads
Like Greek girls on an urn :

Their dark-lashed, rascal sweetness,
Their smiles, I may forget,
But not your constellations,
Splashed gold on miles of jet.

May all your nets be silver chocked,
May all your sails win through !
In each of you were sleepless eyes
When mine were sleepless, too.

WILLIAM ALEXANDER PERCY.

WEST INDIAN FRAGMENTS

I. The Cedars

SEVEN tropic cedars guard my house,
And there is singing in their sighs ;
I think there hangs in each
An exile harp
That plays, untouched,
Remembered music.

II. The Sea

The sea has her arms on my shoulders,
And mine reach out to her ;
She is stronger than I, and purer,
And I shout with the joy of her power,
But I know her heart is a stone.

FRANK LACY HILLIER.

TRYST

O NEVER think to wait for me if Death
Should call, and you should go;
I hold your love until this sweet life's end,
No more I ask or know;

So when the high gold gates have closed upon you
Forget me, if you may;
All this glad love we know need only brighten
This long, glad earthly day;

You have a tryst to keep for old sake's sake—
Ah, heed me not nor care!
For many a friend and old forgotten lover
I shall go greeting there;

But if, where you shall stand in song, forgetting,
You hear swift wings go by,
And on a wind of love there comes old laughter,
That will be I.

MARGARET WIDDEMER.

LIFE'S RECESSIONAL

WHERE are we moving, mighty Artisan?
Give us more light, what future days impend?
At best, this life we scarcely apprehend
When death and sorrow overtake us. Can
Not dimly figure the stupendous plan,
Its strange beginning and its awesome end.
Half-dazed we ask, what does it all portend,
This striving, struggling human caravan?

Thus, through the dark we call for light, *more light*,
When we are parted and the curtains fall
Between us and our loved ones—as the night,
The long, long night comes, and we call and call . . .
O, mighty Artisan, in Thy vast might,
Let us not perish in death's windy hall!

ALICE HUNT BARTLETT.

LONDON LYRICS:

VII. THE BEES

BEES, about the marble Quarries of Pentelicon,
(The flower-dressed gorge of marbles, rose and white)
Soft-eyebrowed bees, mumbling under curtains of wistaria
on Mt. Helicon,
Little rust-brown burrowing bees on Hampstead Heath in
wide unpeopled light:

Stumbling through the grasses, burnished bronze by the
long drought,
Finding in the roadless air, roads that only a bee knows,
Tunnels along sunbeams, runnels along fragrancies,
Roads leading down to gardens,
To sweet gums of pear and poplar,
From syringa, rose to rose.

Down through the sun-built ages, through the gold inter-
stices,
Hum the good bees, getting honey, drip by drip, their golden
store,
Rises like the slow stalagmite on the slower rock
Honey rises along their crusty waxen shelves,—
In their tight hexagonal cells, I hear the thrum of bees,
In my dreams still in the sweet limes of Well Walk
As in a Cornish sea-cave where I once heard their low roar.

MARGARET M. RADFORD.

VIII. JOYFUL LONELINESS

ACROSS the wet brown road,
(Light shines on either way,
Patterned from shop and stall)
We lonely stray.

We—for the wind is here
Flying with eager feet.
We—for the raindrops dance
Beside me in the street.

Dance our stalls all bright
With orange, apple, pear,
Dance against lighted panes,
And sparkle there—

Sparkle and sigh and pass—
Such little splashing feet
Has the rain, such a faery voice
The wind in the street,

As it sings in Hoxton Square.
(An elfin wood that gleams
Where stars have sung the trees
To shapes of dreams.)

Where Shelley walked—and yet
Looks out with eager eyes,
Watching those phantom branches
Fall and rise,

To the song of the wind and rain,
To the splash of raindrops' feet,
To the faery voice of the wind,
In the quiet street.

MONICA PAINTER.

IX. THE STREET VIOLINIST

BESIDE the kerb, in Holborn's savage din,
He stands, apologetic, shabby, thin,
A tired old man, playing a violin.

He plays, maybe, some darting Spanish dance
Or vague Norwegian folksong ; or, perchance,
A ragtime of seductive hesitance.

The swift bow dips and dances ; but no sound
Rises above the hum and roar around.
Unheard, his tunes fall wasted to the ground.

But as in pitiful dumb-show he plays,
His face is rapt and calm ; are not his ways
Wiser than ours, who wrestle all our days

For some small, mean advantage ? Are not we
And all the noisy street, mere shades, while he
And his faint music are reality ?

ELEANOR RENARD.

X. A LONDON LAMENT

IN London, where they mock at God,
Are many things to see and hear—
The rush of steam, the whirr of wheels,
The clank of chain and grind of gear.

The people rushing to and fro
Are fevered by a frightful haste
For fear their thoughts shall catch them up
And turn their hectic hours to waste.

They have no time to wait and think,
They do not want to pause and pray,
They only know that life's too short
And strain to lengthen night and day.

They only know that life's too short
For all they long and strain to do ;
The siren calls of city life
Are damning sounds to listen to.

Intensified vitality
That gathers speed as time goes on
Is like intoxicating wine
Which gives false strength that soon is gone.

The city calls, it chains us down,
It's hard to drag ourselves away,
Like a poor slave who's cursed by drink,
We long to go, yet have to stay.

But when at last we burst our bonds
And feel the turf below our feet,
And see the open, splendid sky
That hardly showed above the street

We fill our lungs and shout for joy ;
It's like the memory of a home
That rushes on us after years
And tells us we were fools to roam.
We feel fresh pride in human life,
The dignity of being man
When we have left the noise and strife
That spoils and mars man's tiny span,
And makes it cruel, false, and odd,
In London, where they mock at God.

MARGARET HUME.

XI. IN LONDON

IN London, in London
The folk go up and down,
And here's a face that wears a smile
And there's one with a frown :
And there I saw a ragged boy,
A little half-starved thing,
And there I saw a débutante
Who went to meet their King.

In London, in London
My hopes and dreams soar high,
For here are all I long to meet,
Here's all I long to buy . . .
And there across the bales of silk
With gold and silver wrought
I saw the gleam of a rosy dream
That is not sold or bought.

LETTIE COLE.

OUR MASTERS.

I

IN a beautiful house we expect to find beautiful objects, and in a book by Benedetto Croce (*Goethe*, Methuen), a great thinker, we look for, and find, great ideas. And Croce, wisely and with a true inspiration, leaves untouched the biographical details of the poet's career, for to judge a writer's work in the light of certain incidents in his life is to judge twice over, by reason that his life has already left its imprint on the man and influenced his pen. We have been, also, somewhat over-swamped with these side glimpses of Goethe, Sainte-Beuve gives us a vignette of Bettina and the poet which leaves rather a poor impression of the great man on the mind. In this book we have the high appreciations of the best work of Goethe, and, no less surely, a sound severity for the lesser and more mannered output. Croce, using a wealth of illustration, deals with the poet's work, and with one sure touch points out that the critical and unbiassed nature of Goethe's mind is one reason why he does not at all times move the reader. He could not draw an unnatural hero, heroic at all points, nor portray an unnatural villain, villainous throughout. Even in dealing with the pathetic figure of Egmont, Goethe's wide-seeing, comprehensive insight would not permit him to put on the canvas a wholly emotional figure. " History did not constitute a serious problem for the mind of Goethe," he introduced it " as a merely decorative element of a world more or less human."

There was also a certain freakishness in Goethe that caused him to insert satiric whimsicalities into the most serious pictures, as in *Der Gott und die Bajadere*, where, as Croce points out, Goethe tries to " avoid the solemnness, the anguish and the torture," and " tells the story partly seriously, partly lightly, as can be noticed in the almost comical bit of dialogue in the first meeting of the inexperienced god and the bayadere," so also in the second part of Faust the asides of Mephistopheles seem to form a jeer at the symbolic seriousness. The criticism on this second part of Faust is very masterly, and leaves one free to enjoy the caprices of the Master without that tormenting strain of striving to disentangle the symbolism of the mythical monsters, the paper money, the strange offspring of Helena and Faust being Byron, and all the bewildering mixing of remote and present ages ; if there is a deep symbolism here it is as hard to define as are the Prophetic books of Blake, with what a contrast between the two poets—Blake so consumed with fire and a devouring seriousness that an unbiassed outlook was impossible for him ; Goethe with so critical and wide a vision that he could not thunder forth one, and one only, aspect of life.

To British minds the German sentimentality of Hermann and

Dorothea, and Charlotte and Edoard, will never perhaps prove entirely congenial; to the Italian's more passionate nature they may prove more sympathetic as dealing with sex affinity in all its astonishing psychological variances, for the ordinary Anglo-Saxon is not given to spending hours in probing his soul or in analysing each heart-beat. In Goethe it is the great and lofty poet that we should study and venerate, and the illuminating critical work of Benedetto Croce in this book will prove to be an enormous incentive, and a true and steady guide.

II

We are, as a rule, transported into another world when we enter into the atmosphere of Maeterlinck's plays. The light of this other world is subdued, as in dreams, inanimate objects take a sinister part in the overhanging tragedy. The characters are not so much living humans whom we know and understand as they are symbolised passions or pale, bloodless, but beautiful creations moving under the unseen hand of an inexorable Fate. Who does not remember Pelleas and Melisande like two figures from a picture by Burne Jones, moving in a strange dim light? It has been the poetic beauty, the haunting "otherness" of his fancy which has been, we think, the crown of his work, his outlook was from a different standpoint to ours, even in *The Bee* it was not as an acute observer that he wrote, but as it had been a great wise insect, as a Solomon of the apiary.

But in these two plays, *The Cloud that Lifted* and *The Power of the Dead* (Methuen) that magic "light that never was on sea or land" has vanished, and instead of an exquisite dream-wove picture Maeterlinck has put before us in the second play a dream that is as real as daylight, and as glaringly connected (even down to the detail of Pierre's spectacles) as are broad-day events. It is disconcerting to find that what we read as being a mystic happening is, after all, nothing but the dreaming of the chief character; the entire second and third Acts and Scene I of the fourth Act are taken up with this dream, which is, nevertheless, as solid as a penny loaf and as distinctly outlined as a motor 'bus. And not only has the hero dreamed, but we have been hoodwinked into doing so also. And there appears, moreover, to be no adequate reason for it. We can only suppose, and there is not a word to justify such a supposition, that there had been in Jean's mind a desire to forge the old money-lender's signature, for without that harboured temptation we cannot comprehend the violent hostility shown by his dead ancestors, nor why they should thrust him out of his Home, and no soul be able to open the doors save the innocent child. In the first scene Jean appears as a nice

careless youth who has lived not wisely but too freely in Paris, and he displays a reverend affection for his dead father and a strong veneration for his ancestors. Because he does not appear to have committed or contemplated a crime we feel inclined to ask, flippantly and vulgarly, what were the old ghosts making so great a coil over ?

In the first play, *The Cloud that Lifted*, we are taken to Finland " in the present day," and the " Cloud " that hastily disposes of itself is personified in the character of a young girl, who, in the words of the play, is like " the dew of the morning, all crystal, azure, dewy, rosy, dawn-like," and this " dawn-like " maiden conceives and carries out a more devilish plot than an Iago would attempt. To lure out an old man, who had befriended her, into the wooded garden and to shoot him in order that the blame (circumstances all miraculously assisting her) may fall on the man she loves, that he may die a murderer's death rather than marry the other woman, and then suddenly to abandon her long-brooded over scheme and shoot herself, is not a convincing figure ; we cannot, even on the stage, accept Tatiana as a real character. To the trained mind, of course, the culprit is evident when the chief of the police says the murdered man was shot in the back of the head, but these few words, missed perhaps in the acting, would leave the spectators wondering who did the murder, for Tatiana's dying speech, " It was I . . . you know. . . . Enough." would convince no one. And as it is " the present day," are there no judges in Finland who would perceive that when two men are exchanging shots and an old man furiously pursuing his opponent, that opponent could not possibly have shot him from behind ?

The young man, Alex, seems rather a poor creature, who makes no effort to exonerate himself ; the girl, Sonia, whom he loves, is a charming sensible young woman, but she, too, is content to accept the horror without so much as a question. We are left, after reading this play, with a deep sense of disappointment and pain, a sense that we should experience if we were suddenly to discover that Burne Jones, in his later years, drew the figures in fashion plates, or that Watts was still alive and had been covering our lamp-posts with aluminium paint. We have few enough lovely poetic dreams in our work-a-day tired world that we devoutly pray that Maeterlinck will return to his own fair domain of tender dreams, of lilies and roses, and old towers, and where purity or love or hate move as human figures.

The translator has adopted the irritating method of repeating the full stop three or four times after nearly every sentence. This adds

to the effect of its being a translation, and the incessant recurrence of these horrid dots is most disturbing. That they occurred in the original is no extenuation ; if a foreign author used the small letter for the personal pronoun in speaking of himself an English version would not copy this peculiarity. ARTHUR HOOD.

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Among subject anthologies *The Book of New York Verse*, edited by Hamilton Fish Armstrong (Putnam), must take a prominent place. Although a generation ago it would not have been thought possible or necessary to compile a collection of poems in honour of New York, we have now a volume of 450 pages of New York verse in which the city is dealt with admiringly and affectionately from many points of view, and more comprehensively than any other city has been described in poetry. London cannot provide, with its longer history and greater literary associations, so notable a collection. The literary merit as well as the diversity of the poems is remarkable ; the editor has not admitted anything in verse merely because New York was the subject. Many poems, however, especially certain beautiful sonnets by Richard Watson Gilder, George Sylvester Viereck, Emma Lazarus and other later poets, and vivid impressionistic pictures by Clinton Scollard, John Hall Wheelock, Margaret Widdemar, Sara Teesdale, E. Arlington Robinson, and, in fact, by almost all the younger writers, are not distinctively and inalienably New York products—they might be applied with little if any alteration to London, and would be true to the life and moods of any great cosmopolitan city.

Of a similar type, but dealing with a less cultivated, less fertile field, is the anthology of Vectensian verse, *Poets of the Wight*, compiled by Charles J. Arnell. With many handicaps, the devoted editor has discharged the duty of a loving son in a careful and thorough manner, and made a better book than many who have had richer fields to harvest. Dorset and Somerset, Lancashire and Yorkshire would provide ampler material, especially on the dialect side, than the Isle of Wight, where, too, there seems to have been little educated native genius of the minor order until recent years. Keats, Tennyson, Swinburne and Mrs. Meynell are included among the Vectensian poets by virtue of residence or transient inspiration, the more specifically Island singers of general fame being hymn writers—Bishop Ken, Mrs. Luke, Albert Midlane. Mr. Arnell had greater limitations and less encouragement in the material at his command than Mr. Armstrong, and we trust that visitors as well as residents who have the least regard for the beauty and the associations of the Wight will appreciate his labour of affection.

THE PREMIUM EDITOR'S REPORT.

THERE are again far more good poems than bad. (One of the worst pays us a second visit; it has gained a prize from a literary agency, it appears, and even been printed in a magazine, so why don't *we* like it? Simply because the basic idea of the poem entirely eludes us, the mechanism is faulty, and not one of the illustrative images is new!) The tragedy of literature at present is not that there are so many poets—that is rather a matter for joy—but that their publication, at least in book form, is based, not on the poet's excellence, but on his exchequer. There must surely be a law of compensation at work somewhere, however, and I know of at least one case where an author, whose circumstances prohibit the idea of being printed and reviewed, is writing peerless poetry. Is this partially "cause and effect"? Shall we all attain greater heights when we neglect our own little personal fames and think only of contributing here and there a brick to the imperishable edifice of English literature? Certainly no man ever wrote the better for becoming the egotistic lapdog of an amused coterie.

Time, in any case, will solve this problem for us (or in our despite). No more shall we see that grotesque absurdity, "The Collected Works of ——." Surely our debt to Shakespeare should be great enough to wipe out *The Comedy of Errors* and *The Taming of the Shrew*, and a reader who turns with heart aflame from *I would go down to the sea again* should not be chilled by a simile involving *the flesh of a haddock*. Our 'prentice anthologists are on the right track, but their faults are twain—they attempt feats beyond their ability and they print the authors' names. What do the names matter? They are but the labels of our explorers, our heralds. The work's the thing. Moreover, plagiarism is but the sin of trespass; it is an offence, not against the law, but against good manners and self-respect. Of course there are those who regard verse-writing as an avocation—but what can one say to them!

A nos moutons! I have read the following with especial pleasure: *To My Mother* (C. Ethel Evans), *Shelley* (Hon. Eleanour Norton), *Spindrift* and *Monotony* (Hugh Montgomerie), *Autumn Leaves* and the first seven lines of *The Blue Moth* (Beryl L. Lucas), *Desolation* (Pauline Marrian), *The Lover* (H. Ross), *The Singer* (C. Martin Shrobyng), *Youth Sets Out* (J. C. Bird), *Gifts* (Noel Allport, who spoils a good poem with the phrase, "O'er vale and hill"), *To a Baby* (E. Joyce Harrison), *White Flowers* (E. Hayes), *The Intruder* (Anne MacDonald), *Song of the Sea* (Victor Ballan, who spoils a magnificent poem by inserting a keystone in an architrave), *The Disappearance* (Cyril G. Taylor), *From a Moving Train* (Rose E. Speight), *To the*

Sweetest of Old Maids (F. A. Carter in real poetic vein), *Silly, Silly, Silly Sheep* (Elsie A. Fielder), *Convalescent* (Nancy Pollok), *Thought on Death* (John Cook), *Triolet* (Helen Punch), and the work of three others.

Book acknowledgments go to Hugh Montgomerie (Glasgow), H. Ross (Hove), Hon. Eleanour Norton (Loughborough), Victor Ballan (Redhill), Nancy Pollok (Glasgow), and John Cook (Lenzie), and I award one guinea to Lee Shippey, a Californian entrant, for his *Rio Panuco*, though his *Peons* was also worthy of high praise; the other guinea to Violet Le Maistre for *The Little Disused Room*, though, similarly, her other entry, *The Little Voice*, was pregnant with real poetry, a charming fragment something in the style of those translations from the Chinese of Arthur Waley or of Cranmer Byng. Attention is drawn to the general rules and the conditions affecting personal criticism. Finally, we print two of Miss Leeke's most recent poems :—

THE ENCHANTED WOOD.

And there is but one sound
As of a bird, singing.
The wood is spell-bound,
And there is but this one sound.
  Out of the still ground
  Seven gaudy flowers are springing.
And there is but one sound
As of a bird, singing.

A POPLAR ON A WET NIGHT.

A Poplar turns over his silver
And counts it in the rain.
For fear lest a bat should pilfer
His wealth, he turns over his silver
Again and again,
With the moan of a miserly soul in pain.
A Poplar turns over his silver
And counts it in the rain.

Gee! After the perusal of all the tortured strivings of chaotically disordered complexes, what refreshment in the cool hand of this authentic poetry! And there is but one memory, as of a bird, singing. O. C. DE C. E.

For Premium Announcements see page viii of Index.

ON THE SPEAKING OF VERSE

I

THE revival of "recitations" under the patronage of Oxford may not have the usual significance, but it is responsible for much heady talk and the thoughtless assertion of old fallacies. We do not know if the propounders know what they mean by the proposition that the poet is the one authority on the vocal interpretation of poetry. Perhaps it is a subtle move of the modernists to keep Tennyson and Shelley off the programmes. Milton and Shakespeare must be barred to the reciter, except at spiritualistic seances, as they cannot be present to act as judges and set the standard. Perhaps it is only the modern poet who is to be allowed to know how not only his own verse should be spoken but also how Browning and Swinburne—if these old Victorians are ever drawn on by the elocutionist—should be spoken. We are not aware whether it is expected that any one modern poet may act on behalf of all his contemporaries, whether Sir William Watson alone can adjudicate on the reading of his own poems or whether he is considered competent to act for Mr. Kipling also.

If this fallacy gains ground the older English poets will fall into greater disuse than ever. We have noticed that with the exception of a few stock poems the men who bulk so largely in the Golden Treasury are neglected by reciters. We have no record of how Shakespeare or Milton read their sonnets, so they must be absolutely barred. Industrious researchers may find some references to the methods of Tennyson and Swinburne, and may revive for us the booming and the shrill voices and insist on being awarded honours all the time without fear of being gainsaid. Fortified by a convenient fallacy, they are proof against the ruling of unsympathetic and superfluous judges.

Schools of verse-speaking attached to different poets will become popular. The revival of the great Victorian will be responsible for his deep-voiced regular beat competing against the high-pitched chant advocated by Mr. Yeats. Yet we are dubious whether it is intended that the Tennysonian or the Yeatsian methods shall be applied to all poets. If not, the reciter who has the courage not to stick to one piece or one poet must be a versatile mimic. The palm at verse-speaking contests will be assured to the imitator; individual interpretation will be at a discount; intelligent artistry will be disparaged, and a poem be little more than a gramophone record, to be mechanically reeled off, instead of a brilliant living thing with a meaning and significance limited only by the intelligence and capacity of the reader. We have been inclined to believe that a

poem is greater than the poet, that the latter is as inferior to it in his normal state and in his normal interpretation of it as the poorest elocutionist, than a poem may be occasionally and to the reader an incomparably greater, finer thing than the writer had any idea of. We have been given exquisite pleasure by widely differing interpretations of Shelley's *Skylark*, but not being Shelley, not knowing how Shelley read that wonderful poem, and not being aware whether Shelley would have approved of any of the renderings or would have voted all of them good, it is apparent we cannot possibly know whether we have heard the poem properly recited. Under the domination of this new-old fallacy, we don't know where we are. We must submit to any mechanical sing-song for which a poet's approval can be adduced, and lest the authority should be questioned we trust the gramophone company will speedily collect authentic records by all poets now available of all their poems and also by each and all of them of all the poems that have ever been written that are ever likely to be recited. All teachers of voice production and diction who have the vocal interpretation of poetry as their ultimate object must use these records and not deviate from them or allow their pupils any individuality. They must revert to methods that had fallen into disrepute and require a mechanical repetition, reproducing the same intonations, the same enunciation, whether crisp or slurred, together with the revival of the old abandoned gestures and tricks, that however natural and significant in one individual, are wholly artificial, meaningless and irritating in another. All of which is absurd.

II

In the theatre we are accustomed to underrate the author. He is the last person to say how his words should be spoken. He frequently has little idea how they should be spoken and is astonished or depressed by the vitality given them by the actor who " creates " the part. We wonder what Shakespeare thought when he heard his lines spoken. Did he find them clothed in new majesty and meaning or was he maddened by the murdering of them ? Did he or his too zealous friends set him up as the sole authority and judge ? If his delivery was affected or stilted, monotonous or mincing, in the fashion of certain modern poets who are supposed to set the standard in these things, we cannot think it was so, remembering Hamlet's excellent advice to the players—was his example widely followed by the elocutionists of his day ?

When the bard was the minstrel, and when art was less highly specialised and sub-divided in the manner of modern industry, the

poet may have been accepted as the speaker, too. To-day, however, he is a diffident or defiant gentleman, very easy or very hard to please, and generally very scornful of what he dismisses as "elocutionary tricks" while knowing nothing about them. Moreover, he takes a pleasure in not writing musically, in using harsh words, in despising the old dictum that poetry is written for sound rather than sight reading. He has lost the sense of sound as well as of sight, words being printed signs only, just as, being a city dweller, a sunset to him is as fabulous as the gardens of the Hesperides. There are others we know, but we are thinking of those who are quoted as authorities outside their own sphere and who are not even competent judges of their own verse.

We would like to know what Browning would have thought of the reading of *Pompilia's Speech* by Miss Sybil Thorndike—to call her "Doctor" would be an academic affectation in such a connection. Did she give this poignant personal version of a murder story as the poet would have read it or as Pompilia would have told her own tale? We feel that at Seaford House on "December's deadest day," Miss Thorndike was not Browning but Pompilia—more truly, sincerely so than her creator could have imagined. He inspired the character but did not dictate the interpretation. The exceptionally simple, direct and beautiful words evoked the character of the pitiful bewildered child-wife taking shape before us under the influence of the magic of the twin *genii*. No artificial effects, no moaning, shrieking or sobbing, no declamation or gesticulation, marred the palpitating sincerity of those crowded ninety minutes, through which the emotions ran the full scale without a false note. And we saw as well as heard Pompilia—a slender figure, clad in blue, with deep gold hair and luminous face suffused with the pale gold light that deepened as the dusk more completely shut off the outer world—a beautiful Renaissance picture that will live in the memory long after the actual words have faded. This glowing Florentine picture reminds us that Miss Julia Huntsman is to illustrate Florence in poetry and pictures at a recital at the Steinway Hall in February. She draws on a treasury of fascinating material, in the collection of which she has spent delightful weeks among the palaces and galleries of Florence and in the haunts of Dante and the Brownings and the magnificent Medici.

III

"Poetry is difficult to read," remarks Pompilia, in an aside that Miss Thorndike made many listeners believe was her own remark. How difficult it is to read and speak effectively is realised by the

practised speakers who regarded the competition for the Lady Margaret Gold Medal as no easy matter but a severe trial of intellectual and physical gifts and capacity. In announcing his award, the very thorough, experienced judge, Mr. Bassett Roe, pointed out that "In estimating the relative merits of those who have already won the high distinction of the Poetry Society's silver medal, we have to search for some factor not common to all. An ear for rhythm, and a more or less, resonant voice, some knowledge of the laws of inflection, each candidate is already credited with. Recognising your possession of those essential qualifications what further test should help to guide us in selecting the winner to-day. I think the answer is to be found in how far the candidate has the wonderful gift of capturing attention and enlisting sympathy. Technique, however perfect, is only half the task, the other half is to cultivate a relationship between the executant and the audience. This implies a certain emotional sensitiveness and vivid imagination. If the reader is not endowed with a sensibility at least equal to that of his auditors he can move but very little. A mere succession of monotones without variety of inflection leaves one cold. To identify himself with the vision of the author demands intensity and spontaneity, the words and lines becoming coloured with emotional tones due to the feeling *of the instant.* This artistry was most convincingly shown by Miss Bertha Impey, who in the *Ode to the Nightingale*, displayed marvellous insight and many delicate touches. Next to her in the power to hold us entranced was Miss Ida Bennett, with somewhat less sense of style, exhibited in an unnecessary gesture in *The Pierrot.* Thirdly came Miss Gladys E. London with unusual dramatic gifts, and much poetic glow in *The Stolen Child.* Unequal in *The Listeners*, Miss Iris Fry captivated everyone with *The Mystic Trumpeter*, and undoubtedly came fourth in the list of honours. Other good work was done by Miss Hilda Howard in the Mellow Sonnet and Miss Mabel Grace Lawrence in *Ode to a Grecian Urn.*"

The next general examination will be held in March. Inquiries and entries should be addressed to the Registrar, The Poetry Society (Incorporated), 16, Featherstone Buildings, London, W.C.1. The Lady Margaret Gold Medal competition will be held in October. Examinations for the Certificate and Bronze Medal will be held in the provinces by special arrangement. Two or more examinations may be arranged in the North of England in March in conjunction with one at Stockton on Tees, provided early application is made to the Registrar.

Successful candidates at the examinations of the Poetry Society (Incorporated), November 17th, 1923, at the University of London.

Certificates—Juniors (Special Mention): *Mabel Maier, Joan Waterman, Gladys Green, Winifred Freeborough. (Passes): Anita Baccharini, Barbara Carr, Lily Pisetsky, Joyce Hazelhurst, Eileen Jones, Dora Mc-Cloy Flower Patters, Daphne Cleary, Doris Staples, Annie Delmont, Ada Sunderland, Betty Knight, Florence Christie, Doris K. Conner, Sylvia Green.

Seniors (Special Mention): Joan Buttfield, Sissy Birmingham, Elfreda Rutzou, *Florence Jarvis, *Iris Roberts, *Vera Dauncey, Phyllis Hall, Ida Gray, Edith Davis, Gwendolyn N. Sharp, *Ivy Specht, Lilian Stray, Rose Hicks, Marjorie Shakel. (Passes): Helen Blumenthal, Dorothy Laurance, Evelyn Spilsbury, Eileen Edwards, Edith Smith, Amy T. Hallam, Gladys Couch.

Bronze Medals—Juniors (Special Mention): Esther Simon. (Passes): Ethel Baker, Ethel Butcher, Joan K. M. Glover, Phyllis M. Goetzee, Frances Moore, Iris St. John.

Senior (Special Mention): Rose Dykes. (Passes): Irene Palmer, Kathleen Patrick, Kathleen L. Benn, Phoebe Moss, Florence Turner, Joyce E. M. Banfield, Phyllis Winch.

Silver Medals—Juniors (Honours): Monica Brett. (Special Mention): Rebecca Marks. (Passes): Josephine Freedman, Dorothy Rowling, Marjorie Hollands.

Seniors (Honours): Marion Mogg. (Pass): Jessie Tandy.

Adults (Honours): Constance McIntyre. (Passes): Eileen K. Meller, Joan B. Gibson.

November 24th, 1923, at Hampstead.

Certificates—Juniors (Special Mention): Edith Brown, Hannah Asher. (Passes): Pearl Langdon, Ivy Wentworth, Edna Hodge.

Seniors (Special Mention): Margaret English. (Passes): Thelma Carman, Nellie Barratt.

Bronze Medals—Juniors (Passes): Julia Jonas, Hilda Brown.

Senior (Pass): Doris Cutler.

July 13th, 1923, at Sheffield.

Certificates—Juniors (Honours): Kathleen Scott. (Special Mention): Margaret Varley, Marjorie Flint, Margaret Baggs. (Passes): Margaret Platt, Eileen Spicer, Vera M. Grayson.

Seniors (Special Mention): Dorothy Wilcox, Kathleen Ibbotson, Mary Athey, Kathleen Oldham, Hilda Rosenburg, Vera Elston, Vera Flint. (Passes): Madge Eglon, Kathleen Boulby.

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* Recommended for the Bronze Medal without further examination.

Adults (Honours): E. Rosamund Kramer, Louie Smith, Gladys Duckett, Nancy Hull. (Special Mention): M. Dorothy Marples, Nora Eddison, Catherine M. Rumfitt, Mary Cooling, Enid O. Drabble.

Bronze Medal—Adult (Special Mention): Edith Johnson. December 14th at Sheffield.

Certificates—Juniors (Special Mention): Dora Jennings, Lily Blackmore, Joan U. Middleton. (Passes): Marjorie Bellwood, Marjorie Williams, Barbara Feinholz, Doreen Abbey.

Senior (Honours): Doreen Youle.

Bronze Medals—Juniors (Special Mention): Eileen Spicer. (Pass): Joyce E. Fletcher.

Seniors (Special Mention): Vera I. Elston. (Passes): Dorothy Wilcox, Joyce Williams, Vera G. Flint.

Adult (Pass) Elsie Willoughby.

Adult Certificates—(Honours): Marjorie C. Andrew, Mrs. Ardron. (Passes): Mrs. R. Murday, Kathleen Walker, Edith Lee.

* * *

The Rt. Hon. W. R. Warren, Prime Minister of Newfoundland, on his recent visit to London, expressed particular regard for poetry and its influence, and became a vice-president of the Poetry Society. Another notable man of action who has become associated with the Society is Admiral Sir Mark Kerr.

* * *

His Highness the Mir of Khairpur, who is a contributor to this issue of The Poetry Review, is taking a personal interest in the development of the Poetry Society in India, and has become a Patron of the Society. His Honour M. K. Shaikh, the Wazir of Khairpur State, has been elected a vice-president of the Poetry Society (Incorporated), together with the Rev. Dr. J. A. Hutton, the Rev. Dr. E. J. B. Kirtlan, the Marchioness of Donegall, the Marchioness Townshend, Lady Battersea and Mr. E. Temple Thurston.

* * *

A member of the Poetry Society in Tahiti, who has promised us an article on the nature of Tahitian songs, is living in the bungalow occupied by Rupert Brooke some years ago. The grandson of Ari-a-Ari, R. L. Stevenson's chieftain friend, lived next door—"a tall, powerful and insolent-looking native, spoilt by civilisation."

"Christianity is rhythmical. In perfection and peace rhythm is found; the things that destroy rhythm are greed, selfishness, anger and vice," declared the Rev. R. L. Gales, "a Parson in Arcady," who read from his own poems at the Savoy Chapel on December 17th—one of the series of Monday Readings now being given there, which have been distinguished by many arresting *obiter dicta* from the beloved Chaplain, whose mission is to bring poetry into life, and the various highly qualified readers who have been responsible for the weekly programmes. The "readers" during the next two months will include the Rev. Dr. Kirtlan, Mr. Lewis Hind, Mrs. Mends Gibson, Mr. F. C. Owlett, and (on his return from Scandinavia) General Sir Ian Hamilton. Members are requested to make this poetry service widely known. It is not possible to announce a definite programme as the service of distinguished members is requisitioned at short notice when they happen to be in London and available.

* * *

The Rev. Dr. E. J. B. Kirtlan, whose rendering into modern English of the early English poem, *Pearl*, we referred to some time ago, and who is a particular authority on early English poetry generally, will be the reader at the Royal Chapel of the Savoy on January 14th, his subject being his own translation of what Gaston Paris said was the "gem of mediæval poetry," viz., Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, an alliterative poem of the fourteenth century.

* * *

An American member of the Poetry Society has taken out a dozen annual subscriptions to THE POETRY REVIEW for 1924 as Christmas gifts to friends—an example that other members and subscribers might follow with great advantage to our fellowship.

"I think every schoolmaster ought to be a member" is the opinion of Mr. J. F. Roxburgh, Head Master of Stowe School, who has become a member of the Poetry Society. An increasing number of members and subscribers in Great Britain and America are drawn from schools and colleges, and during the autumn we enrolled as members more teachers of English than in any previous period. A London schoolmaster testifies to the formative influence exercised by the Poetry Society which is greatly appreciated by the teaching profession. One of our oldest American subscribers, Columbia University, is broadcasting an experimental course on the poetry of Robert Browning—an innovation in the use of wireless telegraphy.

* * *

State Committees of the Poetry Society are being formed in America by our Councillor and Organiser in the United States,

Mrs. Alice Hunt Bartlett, who is actively supported by a number of prominent vice-presidents, including Mrs. Roosevelt Robinson, a sister of the late ex-President, Mr. Hilton Greer, Editor of the *Dallas Journal*, Texas, Mrs. Burget Miller, the Poet Laureate of Colorado, and Mr. W. Xavier Redman of San Francisco.

* * *

The Hampstead 1923 meetings have been regularly attended by a large number of members and the interest in the readings well sustained. The Council, however, will be glad to welcome new members, and members are asked to co-operate in making the work of the Centre known among those who have a serious interest in poetry.

The following programme has been arranged.

January 1st.—Motherhood.

January 15th.—Leigh Hunt, Landor, and Coventry Patmore.

February 5th.—Annual Business Meeting followed by reading of Humorous Poems.

February 19th.—*The Agamemnon of Aeschylus* (Gilbert Murray's translation).

March 4th.—Irish Poets.

The meetings are held at Miss Julie Huntsman's Studios, 150, Finchley Road, N.W.3, commencing at 7.45 p.m.

As announced above the Annual Business Meeting will be held on February 5th, when the accounts, Treasurer's and Secretary's reports for the past year will be submitted for approval, the Council elected and delegates to the Annual General Business Meeting of the Society appointed and for any other business which may be necessary. Nominations for the Council and resolutions for submission to the Annual Meeting should be sent to the Hon. Secretary not later than January 15th.

It has been suggested that afternoon meetings of the Centre should be held in addition to the evening ones, and the first and third Wednesdays in the month have been suggested. Will members and any friends interested in poetry, who would care to attend, communicate with the Hon. Secretary, so that if sufficient support is given to the proposal the meetings can start early in the New Year.

Further information respecting the work of the Centre can be obtained from the Hon. Secretary, Mr. J. F. Tilly, 32, Camden Square, N.W.1 (Telephone : North 709).

* * *

At the first autumn meeting of the Kensington Centre of the Poetry Society on October 4th, Mrs. Dawson opened very ably and

interestingly the discussion on "What is the Value of Poetry in Life?" pointing out, aided by quotations, the immense help in life's difficulties that poetry has been. Many members replied, and Mr. Galloway Kyle gave a very interesting and noble presentation of what poetry means to poetry lovers. Mrs. Mends Gibson was in the chair. On October 18th Mr. Visiak gave a very original and profound address upon "Milton." The lecture, which was listened to with great interest by a large audience, was rendered still more attractive by the delightful recitations from *Samson Agonistes*, by Mrs. Lambert Lack, who also read a poem by Mr. Visiak which was much appreciated. The chair was taken by Mrs. Dawson, Mrs. Mends Gibson being unable to be present owing to her recent sorrow and bereavement, and Mrs. Reynolds very kindly received the members.

The programme of meetings of the Poetry Society in Kensington for the next two months is appended :—

January 17th.—Mr. F. W. Rawnsley, "Shelley," at 45, Pont Street, S.W.

January 31st.—Mr. F. C. Owlett, "Modern Poetry," at 4, Cranley Place, South Kensington, followed by the annual business meeting of the Centre.

February 14th.—Mrs. Lambert Lack, "Scenes from Shakespeare," at 16, Devonshire Place, W.

February 28th.—Mr. Frederick Boas, M.A., "The Poetry of the Pre-Raphaelites," at 5, Roland House, South Kensington.

* * *

Mr. Walter de la Ware gave a very inspiring lecture to members of the Poetry Society in Chelsea at the house of Mrs. Hugh Spender, President. Dealing with "Magic in Poetry," he pointed out the magnetic effect of simple words expressing imaginative experience. All men were poets to some extent, since they created what they loved in life—what they saw and wondered at. People were apt to undervalue their power to transform what they saw or read into personal experience. All true poetry was absolutely inexhaustible. Every poem was in a degree a manifestation of magic and resembled it in its effects, and the power of the natural magic in poetry we judged by its effects on us. Poetry was the child not only of knowledge but of intention, and expressed the realisation that everything in this world was unique.

For the January meeting (8th) the President (Mrs. Spender) will introduce "Nature Poems and Bird Poems," which will be illustrated by songs by Miss Culbert. Mr. E. V. Knox (E. V. O' E. of *Punch*)

will read a paper on Prosody on February 12th, and Mr. John Drinkwater will take the March 11th meeting, and Mr. Harold Spender, whose account of a Longfellow Pilgrimage delighted us on a previous occasion, will alternate with Mr. Drinkwater, so that at each meeting members are assured of a specially attractive personality. Other London members who will be welcomed, if accommodation permits, are reminded that the meetings of the Chelsea Centre are held at 29, Wellington Square, at 5.30 p.m., on the second Tuesday in each month.

* * *

The Reigate Centre of the Poetry Society has recently sustained a very severe loss in the death of Mrs. G. W. Butler, who was one of its original members, and who by her helpful suggestions and inspiring personality contributed not a little to its success. This lady possessed considerable literary gifts, and wrote several charming poems, one or two of which she set to music. A keen lover of nature, especially human nature, she was much interested in Wordsworth and his surroundings, and wrote a sympathetic account of his home life under the title of " Wordsworth's Women-folk " for a literary club of which she was a member for over twenty-five years, the last part of the time as its honorary secretary. This, it is hoped, may be published. A story entitled " The Founder of St. Bartholomew's " has been published since her death by Adlard & Son, Bartholomew Close, the profits from the sale to be devoted to the benefit of the hospital. Mrs. Butler was keenly interested in the cause of education, and for many years successfully conducted as honorary secretary a local branch of the Parents' National Educational Union, and also sat for the last five years on the Educational Committee of the borough. It was characteristic of her devoted energy and cheerful courage that she continued a valued bible-class for older boys to the last.

TO HERBERT TRENCH

FRAGRANCES from your spirit blew;
Into our souls your music fell;
You brought the Blue Bird into view,
Gladly we yielded to the spell.

And yet your heart, with praises warm,
Was quick the generous word to send,
Soul grappling hoops of steel to form,
—To grasp a hand, and claim a friend.

T. C. LEWIS.

MODERN POETIC DRAMA

Flecker—Yeats—Gordon Bottomley—L. Abercrombie —W. W. Gibson.

WILL other people agree, I wonder, with my belief that in poetic drama we find the most "live" expression of poetry, to-day? This is, of course, a generalisation, and generalisations are mostly interesting through their numerous exceptions. But, when we have allowed for exceptions, and given them their due meed of respect, we still find, I think, that that modern poetry which most keenly whets the mental appetite and fills and satisfies the imagination is dramatic poetry. I believe this is, partly, because our feeling for the dramatic conventions of life has quickened in late years; we are as a nation more sympathetic towards circumstances which lie outside our own circumstances. But I believe that the success of much modern poetic drama comes from the fact that, when poets set out to produce something destined eventually for the theatre, they are forced to make a study of *technique*. It takes a very great poet to evolve beautiful creations in epic or narrative poetry, where he can be as diffuse as he pleases—his visions must be supreme in loveliness, his phrasing entirely successful in melody, for him to hold our attention through a long poem. Again, lyrical poetry—and much charming lyrical poetry is written to-day—is in its nature ephemeral; it is the expression of a passing joy, the capture of something small, winged, delicate and beautiful. But the writing of fine dramatic poetry demands not only insight, sympathy and imagination, but a sound and careful craftsmanship. The poet must not be content with making his effects visible to his own æsthetic vision; he must also know how to make them visible to the æsthetic vision of other people; and this kind of academic discipline was never more necessary than now. The writer who voluntarily subjects himself to such discipline, who succeeds because of it or in spite of it, is always a writer of true creative vitality. He has important things to say; therefore, he welcomes a recognised method of saying them. And those authors who are dealing successfully with poetic drama at the moment are

the authors whose impulse to create is so strong, whose blood is so hot with the wine of living, that they have no need to shrink from any severity of *technique*. They know that every phrase they write must be a living, sensitive phrase—but they are not afraid. Their own souls are living and sensitive, and bear words that have the ordained beauty of flowers.

Among numerous lesser or greater examples of modern poetic drama, the work of four authors are, more particularly than that of others, under our immediate notice. Flecker's *Hassan* as a play is an accomplished success; a new book of essays and plays, by W. B. Yeats, is attracting attention and provoking discussion; and a small London audience has quite recently been able to pass judgment on *Gruach*, by Mr. Gordon Bottomley, and *Phœnix*, by Mr. Lascelles Abercrombie. We have, here, a little group of dramatists who write, or have written, poetry; and who have found, in the theatre, something that can act as a medium for their creative expression. They may be taken as more or less representative of the *movement* of dramatic art; for that it is moving, and, I believe, moving towards something truly imaginative, is universally conceded by those who watch the theatre, and what it stands for in life and in art, at the present day.

James Elroy Flecker has taken his place among the poets, and many people have written about him since he died; but it is a pleasure to return to him, a very great pleasure to know that the production of *Hassan** is making him, at the moment, more widely read than he was before. This drama is one to read, just as much as one to listen to and watch; and poetic drama should always be beautiful to read. Yet I cannot help thinking that it is not fulfilling its eventual purposes unless it is suitable for the theatre—unless its inherent vitality can give life to the fashion of its interpretation. This vitality is in *Hassan*. People have called Flecker "frigid." It is a criticism I cannot understand, for I find him, above all modern poets, ardent,

* See the eloquent appreciation by Captain Cranmer Byng, himself an eminent poet-dramatist, in the January 1923 issue of THE POETRY REVIEW.

concentrated, and passionate. And this ardour, concentration and passion seem to have found their most perfectly natural expression in the colour and the emotions of Eastern romance. *Hassan* must have been, to Flecker, the outlet for something in himself—something that demanded the fullness of sunlight and moonlight, joy and sorrow, love and grief, living and dying. Baghdad, in the reign of Haroun-Al-Raschid, gave him the setting that he wanted—nothing less rich, less varied, less sharply divided into light and shadow, would have sufficed.

I think, from my knowledge of Flecker's poetry, and my study of *Hassan* in the slim volume in which it is published, that he would have liked to see his play produced with all the pomp and circumstance with which it is exhibited by its present management. I think this, because Flecker was, above everything else, an artist. As an artist he would have known that certain things in his drama—such as swinging people up window-high in a basket, dropping impossible iron walls down from nowhere, and changing awful beggars into beings rather like archangels—demanded a sumptuous and spectacular setting. They could not be dealt with simply—they claimed realistic treatment. And, be it noted, this realism never distracts from the poetry—if anything, it assists it. The sumptuousness is quite a suitable background for Hassan's *ghazal*—a lovely example of this form of poetry, about which Mr. J. J. Kazi wrote in such an interesting strain in the January-February number of The Poetry Review.

How splendid in the morning glows the lily: with what grace he throws
His supplication to the rose: do roses nod the head, Yasmin?

But when the silver dove descends I find the little flower of friends
Whose very name, that sweetly ends, I say when I have said Yasmin.

The morning light is clear and cold; I dare not in that light behold
A whiter light, a deeper gold, a glory too far shed, Yasmin.

But when the deep red eye of day is level with the lone highway
And some to Meccah turn to pray, and I towards thy bed, Yasmin,

Or when the wind beneath the moon is drifting like a soul aswoon,
And harping planets talk love's tune with milky wings outspread,
Yasmin,

Shower down thy love, O burning bright! For one night or the other night
Will come the Gardener in white, and gathered flowers are dead,
Yasmin.

Words like these tune an audience to a mood in which they can respond to almost any form of romance. The sound dramatist who is working for theatre production never forgets that his words are intended for an audience —unconsciously he treats the audience as a harp upon which he intends to play his own tunes. For, after all, the real puppets of the drama are the listeners and spectators, not the actors of the play.

Hassan is, in the bulk, however, written—and rightly written—in prose of great imaginativeness and flexibility, which sounds beautiful when well-spoken. (Is anything so easy to write, or so dull to read and speak, as bad blank verse?) In the scene between Rafi and Pervaneh, when they have to choose between a day and a night of love followed by death from torture, or separation for ever, we can read this prose at its best.

Rafi: They have changed our guard for the last time; it will be sunset in an hour.

Pervaneh: Still a long hour before your hands are freed to make me a belt of love. Oh, idle sun, I am weary of thy pattern on the wall. Still a long hour!

Rafi: And still a night and a day before our doom.

Pervaneh: Why is your voice so sorrowful? Your words do not keep step with your decision nor march like standard-bearers of your great resolve.

Rafi: What have I decided? What have I resolved? You came near: I saw the wings of your spirit beating the air around you. You locked the silver fetters around my neck and I forgot these manacles of iron: you perfumed me with your hair till this cell became a meadow. . . .

Oh, you woman! Allah curse you for blinding my eyes with love!

That is a very fine culminating note in Rafi's resentful cry against the woman who would have him die with her and for her. "By Allah, I am afraid of death!" he says passionately. Is his love for Pervaneh or his love for life to prevail?

"I am very young. Shall I forget to laugh if I continue to live? Shall I spend all my hours regretting you? Shall I not return to my country and comfort the hearts of those that gave me birth? Have I not my white-walled house, my books, my old friends, my garden of flowers and trees? Has the stream forgotten to sing at the end of my garden because Pervaneh is no more? . . .

"'Love fades,' saith Reason, with a gentler voice. 'Love fades, but doth not fall. Love fadeth not to yellow like the rose but to gold like the leaves upon the poplar by the stream!' And when my poplars are all gold, I shall sit beneath the shade beside the stream to read my book. When I am tired of my book I will lie on my back and watch the clouds. There in the clouds I shall see your face, and remember you with a wistful remembrance, as if you had always been a dream, and the silver torment of your arms had never been more than the white mists circling the round mountain snows."

Now I think it is in words like these that the appeal—the vivid human appeal—of *Hassan* lies. Probably not a young man in the audience whose soul has its own secrets, whose reason has its own gentle remonstrances, but knows the meaning of what Flecker says. For it is surely Flecker—young, dreamy Flecker of twentieth-century England—who tells us these things about himself. It is not really Rafi, the King of the Beggars of Baghdad. No author has ever poured out his treasures more generously than Flecker—he was never ashamed to show his own whimsicality, his own sense of irony, his own burning curiosity about and passionate interest in life, his own dislike of the chills and silences and darknesses of death. And so he is always a young man speaking to other young men—never an author pulling literary strings. It was this that made him a dramatist. It is, I think, this that makes him the only really popular poetic dramatist to-day.

To read anything written by W. B. Yeats is always a delicate and grateful experience for those who love to wander in the quieter places of beautiful literature and to enjoy rhythmic prose.

I notice that in *Plays and Controversies* (Macmillan) the writer says that he has given up the idea of writing lovely prose. Well, he need not give it up. For years I have wondered about the charm of Mr. Yeats's prose, have tried to grasp its secret, and have failed ; but have never failed to be made almost dreamy by its peculiar beauty. And now I read that he has always had his own ideal in prose ; an ideal towards which he has faithfully striven. He need not, I think, fear to have missed his goal.

Mr. Yeats's plays are not in the least like anybody else's, and he says in his book that he wants to create for himself in "an unpopular theatre and an audience like a secret society, where admission is by favour and never to many." He desires a "mysterious art, always reminding and half-reminding those who understand it of dearly loved things, doing its work by suggestion, not by direct statement, . . . a mode of drama Shelley and Keats could have used without ceasing to be themselves." But, in the meantime, he knows, as a critic of life, that "the Popular Theatre should always grow more objective ; more and more a discovery of the simple emotions that make all men kin, clearing itself the while of sentimentality, the wreckage of an obsolete popular culture, seeking always not to feel and imagine, but to understand and to see." We gather from all this—which is much too thoughtful to be adequately written about in a brief article—that Mr. Yeats knows he does not, cannot, write for an ordinary everyday audience. The quality of his work is too delicate, too remote. For my own part, I find something in his poetry that is more perfectly satisfying than in any other poetry—he is almost hypnotic in his ability to be entrancing. He can produce a quite indescribable emotion by the dreamy greys and lavenders, the faint blues and purples that clothe his shadowy muse. But his dramas move, and work out their fate, on the horizons of life, melting into the far silver of the

twilight, or entangled with the mysteries of the stars. His audience can only be gathered from those who are of the Fellowship of the Pure Visionaries—and such, as Mr. Yeats knows well, are very few.

There is something about *Plays and Controversies* which makes it an extremely difficult volume from which to quote successfully. Its writer, in this, as in all his work, creates a very uncommon atmosphere ; and to attempt to take his phrases, whether of poetry or of prose, from this atmosphere is like trying to bring a fragment of moonlight into a room lit by electric globes. One should only read or think about these dramas in shadowy woodland places, or on lonely cliffs that jut out into a brimming sea. At one time in my life I read much poetry on that high rock in St. Malo Bay where one may sit near Chateaubriand's grave. That is the sort of place in which to read the poetry of W. B. Yeats. Is he not, too, of the blood that peopled old Armorica ?

However, with apologies to him, I will take the following from its context. The lines are from the first scene in *The Land of Heart's Desire*, and are spoken by Mary Bruin, a peasant-girl of " some remote time," who stands reading a book in a cottage room, near a door through which she can look far into " a vague mysterious world " beyond a half-lit wood. She answers a question as to what she is reading :

> *Mary :* How a Princess Edane,
> A daughter of a King of Ireland, heard
> A voice singing on a May Eve like this,
> And followed, half awake and half asleep,
> Until she came unto the Land of Faery,
> Where nobody gets old and godly and wise,
> Where nobody gets old and crafty and wise,
> Where nobody gets old and bitter of tongue,
> And she is still there, busied with a dance,
> Deep in the dewy shadow of a wood
> (Or where stars walk upon a mountain top).

That is Mr. Yeats tantalising us with his secret once more ! For I would have readers note that those lines, for all their simplicity, are not everyday lines, nor carelessly written lines, nor commonly spoken lines. They are the

lines of an artist who knows very well what he means to do with words—words which, as Ishak says in *Hassan*, are to be "like little rubies glimmering in a row." Only Mr. Yeats does not bring the red of rubies into his verse at any time, but chooses from paler gems.

One imagines the people, in the room where Mary Bruin is reading, to be very still. The producer, Mr. Yeats tells us, made them almost as motionless as statues when the play was acted. Into this concentrated quiet comes the sound of the faery child singing:

> The wind blows out of the gates of the day,
> The wind blows over the lonely of heart,
> And the lonely of heart is withered away.
> While the faeries dance in a place apart,
> Shaking their milk-white feet in a ring,
> Tossing their milk-white arms in the air;
> For they hear the wind laugh and murmur and sing
> Of a land where even the old are fair,
> And even the wise are merry of tongue;
> But I heard a reed of Coolaney say,
> "When the wind has laughed and murmured and sung
> The lonely of heart is withered away."

Mary Bruin, the young bride, dies in the last scene, and her spirit follows the Faery Child. The whole of the little play is very lovely, and one would like to see it suitably acted.

In *Plays and Controversies* the subject of production is discussed very fully. No topic is, at the moment, more interesting to those who are watching the modern expression of poetry in drama. A poet, I think, always visualises; the fair and shining inhabitants of his mind are a little misty, but they have colour and outline. Mr. Yeats tells us that he feels himself to be, by nature, a dramatist. But I think what he really feels is the intense desire to clothe the sweet-singing people, who call to him from the Land of Heart's Desire, with colour, and music, and form. He wants not only to make them as real to his friends as they are to him; but he wants also to *capture* them for *himself*—to be able to look at them, to hear them speak, and to watch them move. It is the natural desire that burns in the heart of

every poet. It is what makes a poet turn his attention to the theatre. And then, too often, comes the disappointment of the discovery that the audience, trained by habit to expect something different, looks on the airy folk he has called down from cloudy places, with cold and critical eyes. We feel, all through Mr. Yeats's pages, a growing sadness, a deepening disillusionment. He and his friends had thought to bring back the old national imaginative life to the Irish people, but the modern world—the dramatic world—was too powerful for them. They made a Popular Theatre, a theatre for the people, but it was not what they had intended.

All lovers of Mr. Yeats's work should, however, read this book, and the plays at the end of it; which include *At the Hawk's Well*, *The Countess Cathleen* and *Four Plays for Dancers*. The first-mentioned of these I like almost more than anything Mr. Yeats has ever written.

Mr. Gordon Bottomley, as a dramatist, is much more detached and objective than either Flecker or Mr. Yeats; he gives us vivid intellectual stuff, with admirable artistry. *Gruach* is almost perfect in its stagecraft; and the delineation of the girl who became Lady Macbeth is a fine and remarkable achievement. The author puts the description of this girl into the mouth of one of his characters—Macbeth himself, who comes to the Scotch castle as an Envoy from the King, on the night before Gruach's marriage to Conan, the son of the house. It is not often that a poet can describe a character in a few chosen words, and, at the same time, portray precisely the person whom he so depicts. But Mr. Bottomley has succeeded in doing this. The Gruach of Macbeth's lines is the Gruach of the play.

> The mother-bee, that shall out-top her fellows,
> Is straitened in a blind and deepy cell
> As in this tower of darkness is this woman.
> A spirit of power that shakes my mind is here
> In this resourceful woman; she is as still
> As the white heat of a straight, half-wrought sword
> That does not palpitate, yet along its edge
> Lives quiveringly; she can indeed conceive
> Its sudden and brief concentration of anger

In icy tempering, by her sharp life here ;
But stillness is her operative condition.
Nothing falters in her ; nothing shrinks.
She came to me with her eyes as if she made
Decision, and her nearness of approach
Was more immediate than tenderness :
She came as close to me with her intention
As an unexpected and convincing thought.
If I could add her even force to mine
We could increase life's grasp.

From the moment when Gruach and Macbeth meet, the inevitableness, the finality, the large fate that is in the play, has us in its grip. Not a word nor a movement is extraneous or wasted—the flow of events begins like a clear, strong, small stream, which goes on gathering force and impetus until it literally floods into its last great sweep of destiny, when Gruach and Macbeth go out together to their wild bridal in the snow-filled night. It is indeed a powerful drama, and well deserves all the praise that has been meted out to it. Only one thing in it seems to me to be incongruous—that is, the systematic use of imaginative symbols. When Gruach pins up her loose hair with Macbeth's little dagger we feel the thrill that we are intended to feel ; but is the effect what it is meant to be in the scene where she caresses the hellebore blossom, the flower of death, which has fallen from Macbeth's cap ? Personally, I felt the grip of the drama loosen—the incident was a distraction, not a deeper consummation. Mr. Bottomley's art is too nakedly strong for any playing with symbolism. Upon the fine clean edifice which his imagination has built emblems become fanciful, and imagery a trifling artifice. And to say this is perhaps to pay to Mr. Bottomley's craft the highest tribute that could be rendered to it.

Britain's Daughter, which is published in the same volume as *Gruach*, is without this employment of imagery ; and, though much the shorter, it is, I think, the stronger play. It has the same largeness of vision, concentrated into one sombre tragic circumstance ; and its balance is very complete.

Mr. Bottomley has a remarkable power of making a drama *move* to its culmination ; and of showing that culmination as something inevitable. *Britain's Daughter* is a play to read more than once. In a second reading we feel, all the time, the fateful presence of the ships that are to carry away the captured women ; we are ready and tremulous for the coming motions of that tragic driven crowd. The following quotation is from lines spoken by one of the girl prisoners, to Nest, the flogged Princess of Britain, tied to a post on the shore by Roman conquerors :

The First Girl :

What have you to do with me, to command me,
To speak to me, child of the evil race ?
I know when I am defeated : let me alone.
Shall I tell my enemy my heart with cries ?
Shall I waste my blood as you waste others' blood ?
If men must fight for Britain, women must live for Britain :
But your mother and her brood, the ruling women,
The mad fighting fools, who have poured us out
In their pride, in their high-handed magnanimity,
With noble gestures of their souls, with priceless passions,
Let them be brought to lamentation :
Let them discover they are not higher beings than women;
Let us be freed from the danger of their great vision ;
Let them die, let them die, ere they ruin Britain again.

"*Let us be freed from the danger of their great vision !*" There is a line that makes our breath catch, and tears burn sharply behind our eyes ! A naked line ! A line which shows the bareness of the passion that is in the speaker's soul. A writer who can create lines like that has no need of imagery—he can afford to ignore it. I do not know what effect Mr. Bottomley's work has on other people, but it sent me—in order to recover my values, which he had rather shattered—not to Shakespeare, but to *The Cenci*, and to the noblest poetic drama ever written in English, *Samson Agonistes*. Well, I recovered my values ; but I remain convinced of the real greatness of Mr. Gordon Bottomley.

In *Phœnix* Mr. Lascelles Abercrombie appears to be experimenting with Homer as Mr. Bottomley experiments

with Shakespeare ; but he makes strange work of his excursion into tradition. The story is told, of course, in the ninth book of the *Iliad*. Let us recover our memory of it. Phœnix, a sad, weary old man, goes with the ambassadors who are sent to entreat Achilles to return to the Grecian camp. He recalls in sorrowful words the tragedy of his youth and ripe manhood—how his father loved a stranger and how, at his mother's desire, he diverted her affections to himself. His father laid a terrible curse upon him—the curse of perpetual childlessness. In his anger and bitterness he was only restrained by the gods from patricide. He fled from his own home, and carried his anguish and loneliness to Pthia's court ; where, at last, he found comfort in the warm love of a little child who was called Achilles.

There is the heart of the story—the agony of a young Greek to whom fatherhood is denied for ever, the consolation that is brought to him by the clinging affection of a child. Surely Mr. Abercrombie shows a strange insensitiveness to its appeal to the emotions when he turns it into what he describes as a *tragi-comedy ;* surely it is a blunted taste which gives us the legend of *Phœnix* as a story of degenerate passions and chilly insensibilities. Rhodope, the " stranger," is bought by King Amyntor, the father of Phœnix, as a slave. " The slut is common," cries the Queen. She speaks the truth ; the slut is very common indeed. Here is her philosophy of life, given in her own words. One comprehends, after a little study, that she is speaking of the lust that she awakens in men.

Rhodope : How can I help it ? Tell me why I should want
To help it, when it is my delight ? But I
Never askt anyone to quarrel about me,
They will take things so seriously, these men !
They make a lot of earnest nonsense up
And talk it at me, when we might be playing ;
Then in a crack they're at each other's throats,
And I am to blame if anyone's hurt ! But why
Must there be all this flustering work about
The simplest, easiest pleasure in the world ?
Why can't they be like me, the men that love me ?

This speech, strange to relate, rouses admiration in Phœnix—Phœnix, whose young dreams, such as they were, have just been shattered by the discovery that his first love is merely his father's " drab." His answer, his last words, are :

> But you speak an honesty
> Which I can understand ; and it is to you
> That I will say, with all my heart, farewell.

What is it that Phœnix respects in Rhodope ? Is it her confession of soulless animalism ? For she is quite soulless ; and her animalism has not even the chastity and the maternity of beasts. Her deepest emotion is awakened by the size of a soldier's legs ; her language abounds in " *ow's*." " *Ow*," she cries in a little shriek whenever she is startled—strange new syllable in the flow of the English unrhymed pentameter. But Mr. Lascelles Abercrombie rejects nothing of the fashion of the day—he is determined to be as modern in his blank verse as in his psychology. Browning, it is true, broke away from the old traditions of melody and dignity in what should be the noblest form of English poetry. But Browning's revolutionary methods sprang from the mind of the most adventurous energy, the most persistent determination to crash through the crusts and barriers of things, that was ever exhibited by an Englishman who wrote poetry. Let genius follow him—if it can. It is not genius that offers us, in poetry, the phraseology which, one imagines, pertains to a Sunday morning conversation carried on across the breakfast table of a Bloomsbury boarding house. This kind of thing is not poetry, never can be poetry, and no man of letters has a right to offer it, as poetry, to intelligent readers. Hear the Queen speak :

> So you can call me granny if you like !
>
> it's to be hoped
> The pirates did not swindle him in you
> As blankly as they did over those rugs—
> Threadbare trash !
>
> Both of you stop. You will not change what's happen'd
> By squabbling about it.

> And now at last, my pair of simpletons,
> You'll see what you were treasuring.

It is all, I suppose, done deliberately—it is Mr. Lascelles Abercrombie weaving tragi-comedy with threads from the *Iliad*. But it is very depressing. Only once does a ray of humour gleam across the gloom. Phœnix has killed a lion (all alone) and is disappointed with his father's indifference :

> It might have been a rabbit I had killed
> By what he made of it.

Quite possibly rabbiting was a popular pastime among the Greeks in the years which immediately preceded Homer, but it seems a strange enough sport in connection with anyone who helped to rear Achilles.

In vain I have searched through the pages of *Phœnix* for a noble sentiment, a fine rendering of a fine emotion. The King's lines are sometimes well coloured :

> No world's here for love to gaze upon
> But what must seem love's imagery—the blue
> Trembling flame of the seas' infinite gleam
> And clouded snows that pace about the air
> With towering motion, breathing shadowless light.

Those words have a suggestion of Tennyson. I do not know whether Mr. Abercrombie's modernity despises Tennyson, but his best lines have more of the Victorian laureate in them than of any other poet.

> In the first splendour of my sight of her
> The fiery sweet incredible magic came
> And cleansed the world from off me.

How one wishes those lines had been spoken by a clean-souled young man, instead of by a semi-senile old one ! Again :

> Benighted in a calm, poised in a nowhere
> Of breathless dark midway between the stars
> That throng the air and the stars that throng the water.

That is not exactly great, but it is charming. Is Mr. Abercrombie's ability to write lines of this kind the secret

of his inability to extract a modern tragi-comedy from the *Iliad* ? Is he at heart an idealist—even a Victorian idealist ? Does he not love simple, clean, true, goodly things, like children, and sunshine, and summer seas, and spring flowers ? If he does, perhaps one day he will be true to his own inspiration and leave Homeric passions to those who have experienced them.

Le goût est le conscience littéraire de l'âme ! It is well to look into one's soul to find out why, in the use of realistic language in blank verse, " one man may steal a horse, while the other must not look over the hedge." In *Kestrel Edge and Other Plays* (Macmillan) Mr. Wilfred Gibson packs his lines with slang, but one is not offended by it as one is in *Phœnix*. What is the secret of this difference of feeling ? It is soon discovered—Mr. Gibson's method is spontaneous and sincere. We know that his characters are speaking their natural language ; a language that is homely, racy and picturesque. Because of this sincerity, because of his real strength, and because of the true ring of his dramas, we cannot quarrel with Mr. Gibson on account of his total refusal to be traditional. His lines are altogether effective :

> A gey lone out-by God-forsaken neuk,
> Windwhistle : and I sorely rue the day
> Ever I clapt eyes on it.

This volume has the quality of the Brontës' work, and Mr. Gibson seems to me to be to poetic drama very much what Emily Brontë was to prose narrative.

A curious excursion into poetry has been made by Mr. Edward Meads in *Alberna, Queen of Babylon* (Arthur H. Stockwell). Its style may be judged from the priests' song to Jupiter :

> O lord of all infinity,
> Our orizons we offer thee ;
> Thy gracious majesty proclaim,
> Co-equal with thy glorious name.
>
> In spite of nations clamouring,
> Still reigns the mighty lord we sing ;
> And still shall reign when from the sky
> The stars shall fall eternally.

Poor Jupiter! Let us hope that, for his own sake, he didn't listen!

I have by me a little volume called *Royal Blossom*, translated from a play by the Greek poet, Kostes Palamas. It looks so beautiful that I shall not feel my life complete until I have read every word, in print or out of print, that Kostes Palamas ever wrote. It is published by the Yale University Press on the foundation established in memory of Martin Kellogg.

BLANCHE WINDER.

FOR LACK OF DAYS

SHORT span of Life I clutch and squeeze you dry,
Wringing each passing hour with clinging hands,
Pelting the gods with one eternal cry,
My fevered eyes on Time's swift running sands.

Will you not grant me, gods, one extra day,
Yet one more day while still I search for hours;
How shall I age while every year brings May,
And never May has brought me Passion Flowers.

ERDA LANG.

CRAZY SONG

GOD sent me once a lovely thing—
I played with it and broke its wing,
Now would I give the heart o' me
To have it as it used to be.

So delicate it was and rare
I should have cherished it with care
And watched it grow so strong that soon
It might have borne us to the moon.

But oh! it was too weak to mend
And God had nothing more to send;
So I have kept the broken bits
And my poor wandering dreaming wits.

M. E. MORRIS.

POETRY AT THE U.S. CAPITOL

NO higher tribute can be found to the power of poetry in giving added emphasis to arguments and convincing minds well trained in the art of debate than the fact that Congressman Joseph G. Cannon, from Illinois, used it constantly during his forty-six years in Congress, during which he was Speaker of the House for eight years and wielded more political power than has been wielded by any other person in the United States.

When he retired, at the end of the Fourth Session of the Sixty-Seventh Congress, in March, 1923, he still believed with Voltaire that poetry " says more and in fewer words than prose."

Cannon summoned poetry when he was in the height of his power as well as when his power was curtailed by the victory of his political opponents. And he summoned it in one of his most recent addresses, to give emphasis to his opinion of the " reformers " in the Government, as follows :

I suppose a reformer has his place. I sometimes think they get pretty thick. They say that their province is to fight with the Almighty ; that the Almighty and one are a majority. Well, they have their place ; I am not here to abuse them. Nearly all of them are honest, but once and awhile we find one who is a hypocrite, makes his living by being a reformer, but who would think of one of them as a Member of Congress or a President. . . . ? Reform is a much abused word in Government affairs. When I hear men talk about Government reform I am reminded of a newspaper waif I read many years ago :

I'm thankful that the sun and moon
  Are both hung up so high
That no pretentious hand can stretch
  And pull them from the sky.
If they were not, I have no doubt
  But some reforming ass
Would recommend to take them down
  And light the world with gas.

Before his long service in Congress had entitled him to the affectionate title of " Uncle Joe," Cannon had received his training in quoting poetry to strengthen his arguments from such scholars, leaders of the Republican Party, as Horace Greeley, whose use of poetry in political contests is strikingly illustrated in the following excerpts from one of his letters to his boyhood friend but formidable political antagonist Samuel J. Tilden, the leader of the Democratic Party :

Sir,—You and I are growing old. We came here young men from the country, and have lived and struggled side by side for nearly forty years. We have participated ardently in many political struggles, always on different sides. You were the pupil and protégé of Van Buren and Silas Wright ; I, a disciple and follower of Henry Clay. . . .

You hold a most responsible and influential position in the councils of a great party. You could make that party content itself with polling legal votes if you only would.

In our late constitutional convention I tried to erect some fresh barriers against election frauds. Did you ? The very little that I was enabled to effect in this direction I shall try to have ratified by the people at our ensuing election. Will you ?

Mr. Tilden, you can not escape responsibility by saying with the guilty Macbeth—

> Thou canst not say I did it ; never shake
> Thy gory locks at me !
>
> * * * *

Will you do it ? Your reputation is at stake. The cowardly craft which

> Would not play false
> And yet would wrongly win—

will not avail.

These excerpts indicate the important part played by poetry in American affairs, and in the fortunes of the two parties that have controlled the nation's affairs during the past fifty years.

Cannon's favourite poet was James Whitcomb Riley, one of our best Middle West poets ; and, very appropriately,

Congressman James A. Gallivan, from Massachusetts, ended his farewell address with a paraphrase of one of Cannon's favourite lines from Riley: "Good-by, Uncle Joe; take keer o' yourself!"

Representative Addison T. Smith, of Idaho, shows us how Tennyson can be called to support an argument that the Republican Administration has brought prosperity to the industries of the United States, as follows:

A touch, a kiss! The charm was snapt,
  There rose a noise of striking clocks,
And feet that ran, and doors that clapt,
  And barking dogs, and crowing cocks;
A fuller light illumined all,
  And breeze through all the garden swept,
A sudden hubbub shook the hall,
  And sixty feet the fountain leapt.
The hedge broke in, the banner blew,
  The butler drank, the steward scrawl'd,
The fire shot up, the martin flew,
  The parrot screamed, the peacock squall'd;
The maid and page renewed their strife,
  The palace banged and buzzed and clacked,
And all the long-pent stream of life
  Dashed down in a cataract.

Speaking on the economic and political aspects of immigration, Representative James B. Aswell, from Louisiana, uses Aldrich's lines to lend force to his warning to the nation of the possible dangers:

O Liberty, white goddess, is it well
To leave the gates unguarded? on thy breast
Fold Sorrow's children, soothe the hurts of fate,
Lift the downtrodden, but with hand of steel
Stay those who to thy sacred portal come
To waste the gifts of freedom. Have a care
Lest from thy brow the clustered stars be torn
And trampled in the dust. For so of old
The thronging Goth and Vandal trampled Rome,
And where the temples of the Cæsars stood
The lean wolf unmolested made her lair.

It is difficult to conceive of a higher tribute to a man as well as to poetry than that paid by Representative H. Garland Dupré, Louisiana, in his testimonial address upon the death of Representative Lemuel P. Padgett, who for twenty-two years had represented the State of Tennessee in the House of Representatives, which reads in part as follows :

Mr. Speaker, Alfred Tennyson, coming to the Laureateship on the death of William Wordsworth, boasted, in a memorable line, that he wore the laurel " greener from the brow of him who uttered nothing base," and so he who now represents the Seventh District of Tennessee in this Chamber (and those who come after him) may likewise boast that he occupies a seat richer and more honoured for that it was once filled by the man whom we praise and mourn to-day. . . .

The first time I ever heard Mr. Padgett speak was on the occasion of services like these held on the floor of this house in memory of that beloved Louisianian, the late Senator Samuel Douglas McEnery. His address on that occasion impressed me deeply. . . . I can not better close this tribute to Lemuel Phillips Padgett than by quoting a brief passage from his remarks on that day, which seems so applicable to him :

" He was a man of broad sympathies. He had humanitarian views. His sympathies were as broad, as tender, and as generous as his conceptions of his duty to humanity. He was a man of broad intellectual vision. He did not live in the low valley of ignorance and superstition. He had ascended a considerable height on the mountain side of knowledge and of information and of learning ; and from his viewpoint he was enabled to look out far and wide and have a large vision of the activities of men, the energies of life, and the sympathies of the brotherhood of man ; and to these he measured up nobly and grandly.

" But, Mr. Speaker, he is gone—they say ' dead.' If you mean destruction, no. If you mean annihilation, nay. If you mean ' transition,' truly. If you mean the shedding of the habiliments of flesh, that hamper and circumscribe and limit the possibilities, the hopes, the aspirations of the human soul and the human life, yes, indeed. Into a larger, better, more glorious life, where the responsibility shall be greater, where the opportunity shall be larger, where our capacity shall be commensurate with those opportunities, he is gone. As we stand at the grave we say, ' We can follow no farther,' and yet out of our souls comes the thought—

I know not where His islands lift
Their fronded palms in air;
I only know I can not drift
Beyond His love and care."

Joining in the testimonial, Representative Carl Vinson, from Georgia, says:

By his (Padgett's) life we have a verification of the poem which says:

Our lives are songs; God writes the words;
But we set them to music at pleasure:
And the song grows sad or sweet or glad
As we choose to fashion the measure.

Representative Joseph W. Byrns, from Tennessee, Padgett's State, who was by his friend's bedside, gives an intimate picture of a splendid life and leaves us to meditation upon the mysteries of life and living with the profundity of his remarks supported by the poets' lines:

His home life was ideal. More than 40 years ago he married a charming young lady of his native city, who survives him. Their devotion to each other was tender and beautiful. He loved her and their children with all the devotion of which his great heart was capable. He was a devoted, tender, and affectionate husband and a gentle and loving father. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, he was a kindly Christian gentleman. He practised what he preached. Of him it could be said in truth:

His life was gentle; and the elements
So mixed in him that Nature might stand up
And say to all the world, "This was a man!"

He died peacefully, for throughout his life he had followed the injunction to—

So live that when thy summons comes to join
The innumerable caravan which moves
To that mysterious realm where each shall take
His chamber in the silent halls of death,
Thou go not like the quarry slave at night
Scourged to his dungeon, but sustained and soothed
By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave

Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
About him and lies down to pleasant dreams.

Representative Edward H. Wason, from New Hampshire, another friend, calls upon the muse to depict Padgett's life :

He never forgot to observe in his daily life the teachings described in the following lines :

We live in deeds, not years, not breaths ;
In feelings, not in figures on the dial,
We should count time by heart throbs. He most lives
Who thinks most, feels the noblest, acts the best.

And another friend, Representative Schuyler Otis Bland, from Virginia, bids his beloved colleague farewell :

Farewell ! A word that must be, and hath been—
A sound which makes us linger, yet—farewell.

THE OLD WOMAN

I HAVE been loved.
Once, long ago, I had so much to give ;
All Love's alluring subtleties I knew,
Warm raptures, and the tenderness that binds
The fiercer passions into lasting stuff.

I was a friend, I kept a burnished mind ;
No man could give men friendship quite so sweet,
So mother-comforting as mine.
And I could give the great gifts of the Gods ;
With sons I gave men Immortality.

Now I am old, I sit here quietly,
Calm in my corner with my memories.
Colour and warmth have left me, but I smile
My wise old smile, saying " I lived my life."
I have been loved.

Z. M. THORNE.

THE VOICE OF THE DEEP

MAY the sound of great waters be never far from me—
The full voice or murmur of the everlasting sea.

By morning, by midnight, in the dock of Time or sleep,
May I know from near or far the communion of the Deep.

In the southland are deserts where the souls of men grow strong.
There is peace within their borders: I would not have it long.

Far off there are mountains where the clear snow-rivers fall.
In vain from the distance their pillared waters call.

Forests there be, and plains where herds do live.
They have given awhile to me, and have no more to give.

But you, exalting sea! are nevermore the same,
Who fill the lonely heart with question as a flame.

Who, when the heart would take hold on joy and rest,
Set to the soul a wild and mighty quest—

Crying, "Not here the demanding Vision lies,
Nor in Earth whose breast upholds, nor Earth's immuring skies!

"In man are old deeps that my ghostly thunders fill,
With whispers that exalt, with trumpetings that still.

"In his heart are strange tables, on which a Hand has graved.
If the rune be read at last, at last shall he be saved.

"Fruit of my womb he was, in years without a name.
He yearns unto the stars, made wistful of their flame.

"I have set hungers in him, and pangs of mystery,
Giving him broken sight of the god he yet shall be.

"With the music of the Past, with the flowers of the mire,
He is dupe of soul and sense, ere the witching lamps expire.

"Their light is not for long in the gaze of my stars,
Which he shall seek the more, having seen them through his bars.

"Now monsters surround him, in darks he can but name.
He knows he cannot know, but is conscious of his shame.

"If his gaze be from the dark, let him love the more the light.
If his way be from the mire, then the holier the height.

"The Hands that led him forth are of eternal things.
Sorrow and mystery shall meet to give him wings.

"He was newt, he was ape, he is hateful child to-day.
He needs but look backward, to know his upward way.

"With mother such as I, let him put by his fears.
He shall wander yet the skies ere the ending of the years."

May the sound of great waters be never far from me—
The full voice or murmur of the everlasting sea.

GEORGE STERLING.

Bohemian Club, San Francisco, Cal.

WORLD'S END

MY shoulder followed through the sea
And over it hung the deathly moon.
I swam and said: "O can it be
That I have died so soon?"

I felt the world's remotest end,
I was borne by the moonlight clean and wide,
As once I was borne by the light of a friend
To the world's end when she died.

WITTER BYNNER.

A BIRD IN THE PEAR BLOSSOM

NOW Ashtoreth her lamp uplifts,
Slim-curved and silver-bright to see,
And from the blossoming pear-tree drifts
A tide of sweetness. . . . Sing for me.
Star-legions through the tarnished gold
Of sundown drive their quivering spears. . . .
Sing, twilight bird, those songs which hold
The echoes of ten thousand years,
That round the low, star-shaken sky
An urgent muse may beat and fret.
The songs of men sound wearily,
But yours is tireless, tireless yet.

For men are not as birds to hold
The same phrase unrevised until
Time's doom; for ever growing old
We ask of youth a new note still.
Too easily the pitch is got,
Too easily the measures flow,
Of songs they sang in Camelot
And spellbound cities years ago.
And latterly our days have known
Lips that essay rebellious notes—
That startle with discordant tone
The poet-choir of clearer throats;
And, out of date, those dreamers reap
The scorn of fools, who seek in thought
Remote from folly's rubbish-heap,
Things lovely and of pure report—
Yet this hour too will pass, and these
Harsh strains be modes outplayed, uncouth;
And summers wooed by sweeter keys
Shall pardon our frustrated youth.
For some of us in fevered dream
Insistent on one weary tune
Can only, with wry lips, blaspheme
Our irrecoverable June;
And some in nightmare ways have fared
And see distorted shapes alone,

And some, who might have sung, have stared
On Gorgon horror, and are stone.

The world awaits a new song now,
Finger on lip. . . . And I, I strain
To see the future, wondering how
Beauty and Art shall kiss again.
Not as he clasped in former days
Shall clasp, with radiant new desire,
The comely lover, crowned with bays,
His goddess, fugitive as fire.
Echoes and imitations creep
To die along the bardic string:
But tarries one whose young lips keep
A song that only he can sing.

I watch; but not by pavements wide
Where clamorous feet have clanged before,
And lanterns flash and voices guide,
Shall come that youngest troubadour;
But haply by some baffling zone,
Some moonless landscape of the mind,
Wherein the Child of Song goes lone
In search of what none else may find—
An Ygdrasil enwreathed with stars,
An ark, a grail, a sacred scroll—
His vision whose desire unbars
The hidden place of his own soul.
For this I know, nor I alone—
The New Song harbours, mute and shy,
In every heart; is wed, is one,
With its unique identity.
From any lyre those staves might leap,
Could hand but wake the crying string,
For no man's born but bears asleep
A song that only he can sing.

While Ashtoreth her arc uplifts,
Slim like a classic lamp to see,

Sing, bird, among the bloom that drifts
  In showers down-shaken, sing for me.
Star-legions pierce the blazoned gold
  Of sundown's banners, bright like spears. . . .
Sing, voice of dusk, those strains which hold
  The echoes of uncounted years.
But till time wane, against the sky
  A conscious muse shall beat and fret.
The songs of birds sound changelessly,
  But man's is restless, restless yet.

ALBERTA VICKRIDGE.

RESURRECTION

WHILE Jesus lay in the death of His Body
Sudden rang the call through the cave hewn deep.
Shining like a star in the sepulchred shadow
He stirred and leapt up from His anointed sleep.

For God's strange Garment swept the paths untrodden :
Wonderful His Voice in the windless trees :
" My Beloved Son." " My Father ! "—The stone heard it,
Moved, and Jesus Christ fulfilled all prophecies.

Not as exhausted from His crucifixion—
The Saviour stood forth on the dewy ground
Jewelled with bright Scars in that triumphal morning ;
Beauty beyond dream passed by without a sound.

Who dare conceive of Jesus and His Father ?
Their Way of Reunion, if ye can tell ?
The tale of the Cross, and of His Incarnation,
The love of His Mother, and the grief of Hell.

Darkened was the garden to guard that Meeting,
Bowed down the dawn, and the quiet night done ;
Trembled the earth in the throes of adoration
When God from the grave received His Only Son.

V. D. GOODWIN.

ELUDED

CHIRP ! from the eaves.
Chirp ! from the dewed leaves ;
And the apple tree heaves
In night wind in the eye of the moon.
There is a dream I forget ;
I would capture it newly. Yet,
What's a dream, so slumber come soon ?

Hair of ripe corn !
Cornflowers, new-born,
Her clear eyes seem !
Forth of this witched dell,
Heaven were but deep Hell.
Aië ! I know well
This is but dream.

Fortress of air, too fragile to resist,
Dissolve my soul with thine ; and the same mist
That bears thee hence
Shall bear
Me, slumber-fettered,
Tossed in air ;
And whither and whence
Thou comest and goest,
Changed but unbettered,
I am there ! I am there !

. . . .

Stormed castle ! drawbridge crossed !
A vandal shock !
And knocking at the inner gates of my dream,
The alarm clock !

Black on a grey sky,
My apple tree ; and the eye
Of the full moon's covered.
Slumber may come back ?
Not on the witched track
Where my dream hovered !

OLIVER C. DE C. ELLIS.

THE MOUNTAIN PATHWAY

I.

OH lonely lies the mountain strath, and the rugged slopes rise high;
Like sentinels the mighty bens stand up against the sky;
And the antlered deer and the grey sheep browse beside the tinkling rills;
And winds a lonely pathway through the bosom of the hills;
And high the furthest summit stands, the rampart of the glen;
Where murmurs float from the far-off world, of the eager life of men;
And from peak to summit the signals pass;
And the long road winds through the heather and grass;
And the lads fare evermore
Where their fathers went before;
Though their weary hearts and their longing thoughts to the dim strath roam
When shadows fall; and the lights are lit; and the kye come home.

II.

Oh my gudeman heard the summons, and he'll ne'er come back again;
And Alasdair, my eldest son, for the roving life was fain;
And I lived alone while the years crept by, in the upland strath forlorn
With my Colin and my Angus tall, and Donald-beg, my youngest-born.
And the road was long, and the mountains steep; and the world was far.
Till beyond the glens a call arose, the slogan-cry of war;
And nearer came the strife and stir; and through the mountains high
We heard the tramp of the kilted men, and the wailing pibroch's cry;
—From crag and corrie the strains resound—
And the straths awoke, and the watching bens, to the tumult-storm of sound;

We saw the kilted soldiers marching; heard the shrilling
pibroch play;
And my Colin went, and my Angus went; and the clansmen
marched away
With the slogan in the glen
Calling to the Highland men;
With the shrilling, thrilling slogan calling through the
mountains grey;
Till the shepherds passed with their bleating sheep, at the
close of day.

III.

Now silence broods o'er the lonely strath, for the anguish'd
strife is still;
And the black-cock crows to the browsing sheep; and
softly flows the rill;
But my Colin sleeps, and my Angus sleeps; in a far-off
field they lie.
Serene and far the lofty bens against the summer sky;
And still the silent messages from peak to summit pass;
And ever winds the pathway through the heather and the
grass;
And the hills are steep, and the way is long;
But the spell of the mountain path is strong;
And my Donald dreams alone
On the moorland, purple-strewn;
And he'll fare the way that the tall lads went, nor may my
sad heart grieve
When the lights gleam out, and the kye come home, at the
fall of eve.

HILDA SKAE.

A PRAYER

IF there be aught of worth in me
By grace of Thy o'ershadowing,
Some beauty, truth, or love, I owe
Such meed of bounty unto Thee.
Lord grant the seed of goodness grow,
Glad harvest for Thy gathering.

S. M. GOODE.

LONDON LYRICS:

XII. SWEET LAVENDER

LAVENDER she gave to me and pinned upon my coat,
Pinned the very pieces that had lain against her throat ;
London streets had dusty seemed, and houses, frowning, grey,
But now the scent of lavender goes with me all the way.

EVELYN D. BANGAY.

XIII. RANDOM ECSTASIES

HAIL, Spirit of Delight ! on what frail wings
Oft comest thou to stir our languid hearts !—
Bluebells amid the croziered bracken glades ;
Ribands of yellow pansies on an upland track ;
The passionate glow of gorse against blue sky ;
Rapture of almond blossom in a London street ;
And, in a Finchley garden, after rain,
A blackbird's fluting from the dripping trees.

HILDA DRABBLE.

XIV. TRAFFIC

CRADLED in your wide arms I wake
To hear no linnet sing,
No thrush enchanted at the morn
In rapture carolling,
There floats no perfume on the wind
To tell me of the Spring.

And yet I slept the whole night through
Dreaming, I know not why,
Of far-off glittering Devon
Sapphire of sea and sky,
Nor woke in the pale dawn to hear
The heavy vans roll by.

Past low-voiced streams in solitude
Where shadows darkly lay,
Up narrow paths too steep for haste
I trod my light-foot way,
Knowing I dreamed and fearing still
The coming of the day.

Now cradled in your arms I wake,
Awed as a child might be,
At the loud beating of your heart,
Grown strangely close to me—
The roar and thunder of your voice
In one great answ'ring sea.

W. TASKER.

XV. YOUTH IN LONDON

HERE, in this busy world, adventure lies,
Here bright ambition lifts its banners high
And golden flame flings magic to the sky
And every dusk is blue with mysteries ;
Courage is here and will not know defeat,
And music rings with every horse's hoof,
And all the gleaming lights are certain proof
That magic walketh in the city streets.

I must go out and climb the golden stair,
The world is mine, I was reborn to-day.
No fear shall dim my light nor clip my wing.

Wonder of Heaven, what spirit walketh there ?
'Tis love, she comes to lift me on my way
'Till I astride this city like a king.

DORIS WESTWOOD.

XVI. PROTEST FROM LONDON

IN Cropton meadows big moon-daisies grow
And honeysuckle climbs in Cropton Lane.
Here in the park are formal beds of flowers—
Homesick I am for clover fields again.

I know a hedge where tall against the sky
Wild roses grow in casual wayward grace
Gaily adventuring ; the roses here
Have never a leaf nor briar out of place.

In Cropton gardens through the long, sweet days
Glad is the face of every flower that grows,
But here—these little intimate thoughts of God—
They stand subdued in tidy squares and rows.

MOLLY YOUNG.

Previous Surveys.—In May–June, 1923 : The Internationalism of Poetry ; In July–August : The Ultimate West in Poetry ; In September–October : The Bards of the South and South-West.

VOICES FROM THE GREAT INLAND STATES: Illinois

PICTURE for yourself a state of things where one has over a hundred million neighbours ! This is the case with any American, if you are willing to admit the premise that a neighbour is a person you do not have to cross salt-water to see. He or she is just over the fence or the state-line, and is easily reached in one's mind. Were they to move to an adjacent island where salt-water must be crossed to see them, their status alters. They have become people you think about in another way, and their loyalty, let us say, becomes a more romantic thing—much more so than the loyalty of neighbour. Their comings and goings possess more interest. We expect more of our neighbours. They must light all their lights or orchestrate uncommonly well for one to pay attention to neighbours.

Many of our poetic neighbours living in America's great inland states have done this last very thing, and we have given them our interested attention. To mention a few contemporary poets, Carl Sandburg, Vachel Lindsay, and Edgar Lee Masters, our neighbours in Illinois, have so orchestrated that we have been compelled to listen with admiration. And there are many others.

The literature of the State of Illinois has a uniqueness and charm all its own. The Indian note, the French, Spanish, English are all here. But we find the first book of poetry by a Wm. Asbury Kenyon was not published until 1845. The Mormons contributed very little to literature outside of their religious works.

Among the names distinguished in literature we find those of H. C. Chatfield-Taylor, Horace S. Fiske, Elizabeth Gordon, Ring W. Larner and many more, names lack of space forbids listing here. We must not, however, fail to speak of Eugene Field, whose long stay in Chicago between

the years 1883 and 1895 and his poems about the "windy city" have caused him to be listed among the Chicago poets. As a testimonial to his exquisite poetry and sympathy with the children of the world, Chicago has placed a very beautiful memorial in Lincoln Park, Chicago, which shows two most engaging little children sitting together, while bending over them, dropping roses on their dear little heads, is a very human-looking angel, the draped figure of a lovely young woman, with pretty, smallish wings rising over her very graceful shoulders.

The school of vers librists reaches, one may say, perfection in Carl Sandburg. His is a dramatic attack on the grim facts of life with a vivid sense of beauty. Those of us who like rhyme and the old forms wish that Sandburg once and again would give us of such, but nevertheless appreciate what he has given. Whether Chicago likes her pictures from his pen or no, they are convincing in their dramatic power. It will take another age, perhaps a gentler genius, to change any uninformed view of that immense city.

The title of *Smoke and Steel* is well chosen (Harcourt, Brace and Co.). Among the silhouettes therein contained is the following:

MANUEL SYSTEM.

Mary has a thingamajig clamped on her head
And sits all day taking plugs out and sticking plugs in,
Flashes and flashes—voices and voices
calling for ears to pour words in.
Faces at the ends of wires asking for other faces
at the ends of other wires:
All day taking plugs out and sticking plugs in.
Mary has a thingamajig clamped on her ears.

Searching in its satire and typical of his genius is his poem (?) *The Sins of Kalamazoo.* Equally vivid is his *A.E.F.:*

There will be a rusty gun on the wall, sweetheart,
The rifle grooves curling with flakes of rust.
A spider will make a silver string nest in the darkest, warmest corner of it.
The trigger and the range-finder, they too will be rusty,

And no hands will polish the gun and it will hang on the wall.
Fore fingers and thumbs will point absently and casually toward it.
It will be spoken among half-forgotten, wished to be forgotten things.
They will tell the spider : Go on, you're doing good work.

His *Throwbacks* has much beauty in it ; characteristic and powerful is his *Grieg :*

Grieg being dead we may speak of his art,
* * *
Grieg being dead does not care a hell's hoot what we say.
Morning, Spring, Anitra's Dance,
He dreams them at the door of new stars.

His *Night Movement—New York* has fine waves in it :

In the night when the sea-winds take the city in their arms,
* * *

Ending with :

And the sailors and soldiers look for numbers on doors,
In the night . . .

A short and graphic poem is his *Finish :*

Death comes one, let it be easy.
Ring one bell for me once, let it go at that.
Or ring no bell at all, better yet.

Sing one song if I die,
Sing " John Brown's Body " or " Shout All Over God's Heaven."
Or sing nothing at all, better yet.
Death comes once, let it be easy.

His book *Cornhuskers* (Holt and Co., 1918) and his latest *Slabs of the Sunburnt West* (Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1922) contain many strong pictures. In my opinion he has written nothing handsomer than *The Great Hunt :*

I cannot tell you now ;
When the winds drive and whirl
Blow me along no longer,
And the winds a'whisper at last—
Maybe I'll tell you then—
some other time.

When the roses flash to the sunset
Reels to the wrack and the twist,
And the rose is a red bygone,
When the face I love is going
And the gate to the end shall clang,
And it's no use to beckon and say " So long "—
Maybe I'll tell you then—
some other time.

I never knew any more beautiful than you :

I've hunted you under my thoughts,
I've broken down under the wind
And into the roses looking for you.
I shall never find any
greater than you.

* * *

Nicholas Vachel Lindsay was born at Springfield, Ill. (November 10th, 1879). He was a student at Hiram College, Ohio, and Art Institute, Chicago. He lectured for West Side Y.M.C.A., New York, from 1905 to 1909. He also lectured for the Anti-Saloon League through Central Illinois. He walked from Illinois to New Mexico in the summer of 1912 speaking on behalf of the Gospel of Beauty. He has published many books on poetry and has been a great elocutioner of his own stirring poetry.

His poems have recently been collected in one volume (Macmillan, 1923). This volume contains also a survey and study of his entire work in verse. He asserts therein " this whole book is a weapon in a strenuous battlefield." Mr. Lindsay is classed as an emotionalist, and he is admitted to be a poetical evangelist, a prophet of the Middle West, intensely religious. He challenges the elements of evil with no intent but to use his gift—and great it is—to high purpose primarily. He has placed upon all his writings an indelible stamp which is distinctly his and distinctly American.

If at times it does not seem poetry in the old-world sense it is none the less a record not to miss for the reasons given. The exuberance of the man, his words, the music that is

in him and he can express, the beauty he has seen often enough to be able to be on an easy footing with her, all of these qualities entitle him to a lasting hold on the minds and hearts of live people.

There are breadth and depth throughout the pages of his *Collected Poems*. The great character of America's Lincoln has always challenged those who had the gift of speech, and Lindsay has not escaped. His portrait of Lincoln is given below:

ABRAHAM LINCOLN WALKS AT MIDNIGHT.

(In Springfield, Illinois.)

It is portentous, and a thing of state
That here at midnight, in our little town
A mourning figure walks, and will not rest,
Near the old court-house pacing up and down,

Or by his homestead, on in shadowed yards
He lingers where his children used to play,
Or through the market, on the well-worn stones
He stalks until the dawn stars burn away.

A bronzed, lank man! His suit of ancient black,
A famous high top-hat and plain worn shawl
Make him the quaint great figure that men love,
The prairie-lawyer, master of us all.

He cannot sleep upon his hillside now.
He is among us: as in times before!
And we who toss and lie awake for long
Breathe deep, and start, to see him pass the door.

His head is bowed. He thinks on men and kings.
Yea, when the sick world cries, how can he sleep?
Too many peasants fight, they know not why,
Too many homesteads in black terror weep.

The sins of all the war-lords burn his heart.
He sees the dreadnoughts scouring every main.
He carries on his shawl-wrapped shoulders now
The bitterness, the folly and the pain.

He cannot rest until a spirit-dawn
Shall come ; the shining hope of Europe free :
The league of sober folk, the Workers' Earth,
Bringing long peace to Cornland, Alp and Sea.

It breaks his heart that kings must murder still,
That all his hours of travail here for men
Seem yet in vain. And who will bring white peace
That he may sleep upon his hill again ?

It is a fine picture and as unforgettable as any presentment of this great world figure, and so simple a child would understand it, and by that one means so beautiful !

Also very dramatic and striking is his *The Drunkard's Funeral*, which begins :

" Yes," said the sister with the little pinched face,
The busy little sister with the funny little tract :

ending with

The moral,
The conclusion,
The verdict now you know :
" The saloon must go,
The saloon must go,
The saloon,
The saloon,
The saloon
Must go."

" You are right, little sister," I said to myself,
" You are right, good sister," I said.
" Though you wear a mussy bonnet
On your little grey head,
You are right, little sister," I said.

One is perforce impressed by his sobering treatment of subjects that when treated by less high-minded pens become little more than parading of emotions under the poetic licence. Always the high purpose is clear in such poems by this sympathetic and sensitive genius.

Many of Lindsay's poems are drama to the *n*th degree

Take for instance his *Simon Legree—A Negro Sermon*, which belongs to what he is pleased to call " The Booker Washington Trilogy " (A Memorial to Booker T. Washington).

From the moment we met Simon Legree in the first line
Legree's big house was white and green
His cotton-fields were the best to be seen.
He had strong horses and opulent cattle.
And bloodhounds bold, with chains that would rattle.
His garret was full of curious things :
Books of magic, bags of gold,
And rabbits' feet on long twine strings,
But he went down to the Devil.

Over two pages each word is electric to the last verse which concludes this extraordinary poem :

And the Devil said to Simon Legree :
" I like your style, so wicked and free.
Come sit and share my throne with me,
And let us bark and revel."
And there they sit and gnash their teeth,
And each one wears a hop-vine wreath.
They are matching pennies and shooting craps,
They are playing poker and taking naps.
And old Legree is fat and fine :
He eats the fire, he drinks the wine—
Blood and burning turpentine—
Down, down with the Devil ;
Down, down with the Devil ;
Down, down with the Devil.

I will not pass over *An Indian Summer Day on the Prairie :*

The sun is a huntress young,
The sun is a red, red joy,
The sun is an Indian girl,
Of the tribe of the Illinois.

Mid-Morning.
The sun is a smouldering fire,
That creeps through the high grey plain
And leaves not a bush of clouds
To blossom with flowers of rain.

Noon.

The sun is a wonderful deer,
That treads pale grass in the skies,
Shaking his golden horns,
Flashing his baleful eyes.

Sunset.

The sun is an eagle old,
There in the windless west.
Atop of the spirit-cliffs
He builds him a crimson nest.

To show the breadth of Vachel Lindsay's religious thought, below is his *Incense :*

Think not that incense-smoke has had its day.
My friends, the incense-time has but begun.
Creed upon creed, cult upon cult shall bloom,
Shrine after shrine grow grey beneath the sun.

And mountain-boulders in our aged West
Shall guard the graves of hermits truth-endowed :
And there the scholar from the Chinese hills
Shall do deep honour, with his wise head bowed.

And on our old, old plains some muddy stream,
Dark as the Ganges, shall, like that strange tide—
(Whispering mystery to half the earth)—
Gather the praying millions to its side.

And flow past halls with statues in white stone
To saints unborn to-day, whose lives of grace
Shall make one shining, universal church
Where all Faiths kneel, as brothers, in one place.

Very characteristic is his *Niagara :*

I

Within the town of Buffalo
Are prosy men with leaden eyes.
Like ants they worry to and fro
(Important men, in Buffalo).
But only twenty miles away
A deathless glory is at play :
Niagara, Niagara.

2

The women buy their lace and cry :
" O such a delicate design,"
And over ostrich feathers sigh,
By counters there, in Buffalo.
The children haunt the trinket shops,
They buy false-faces, bells and tops,
Forgetting great Niagara.

And the sixth verse is

Above the town a tiny bird,
A shining speck at sleepy dawn,
Forgets the ant-hill so absurd,
This self-important Buffalo.
Descending twenty miles away
He bathes his wings at break of day—
Niagara, Niagara.

Vachel Lindsay's love for his " home-town " is expressed in many of his poems. In his foreword he says, " I was born in Springfield, Ill., in the house where I now live. Everything begins and ends there for me." These are potent words. Again, " As I knew from my earliest days, our front parlour was a place of distinction. Parties had been given to Abraham Lincoln there by his sister-in-law, especially one grand one before he started for Washington as President." How refreshing !

ON THE BUILDING OF SPRINGFIELD.

Let not our town be large, remembering
That little Athens was the muses' home,
That Oxford rules the heart of London still,
That Florence gave the Renaissance to Rome.

Record it for the grandson of your son—
A city is not builded in a day :
Our little town cannot complete her soul
Till countless generations pass away.

Now let each child be joined as to a church
To her perpetual hopes, each man ordained :
Let every street be made a reverent aisle
Where Music grows and Beauty is unchained.

Let Science and Machinery and Trade
Be slaves of her, and make her all in all,
Building against our blatant, restless time
An unseen, skilful, mediæval wall.

Let every citizen be rich toward God.
Let Christ the beggar, teach divinity.
Let no man rule who holds his money dear.
Let this, our city, be our luxury.

We should build parks that students from afar
Would choose to starve in, rather than go home,
Fair little squares, with Phidian ornament,
Food for the spirit, milk and honeycomb.

Songs shall be sung by us in that good day,
Songs we have written, blood within the rhyme
Beating, as when Old England still was glad—
The purple, rich Elizabethan time.

The thirteenth and last verse is :

We must have many Lincoln-hearted men.
A city is not builded in a day.
And they must do their work, and come and go
While countless generations pass away.

Mr. Lindsay believes in the moral force and beauty of what is known as the " yell." Quoting his words : " The *literati* of Great Britain do not seem to have realised it, but yell-writing is as steady an occupation of bright youths here as the writing of sonnets was in England in the Elizabethan age. I take it that ' sonnet ' is Sanskrit for ' yell,' and ' yell " will some day be Sanskrit for ' sonnet.' " He is working out many original ideas in his great choruses where many people recite in unison and produce striking effects. He says, " Unless I am much mistaken, I shall sooner or later evolve a special type of United States hieroglyphics, based on a contemplation of the borderline between letters and art, and the bridges that cross it."

His last line in his foreword, which is all intensely interesting, is

Come, let us be bold with our songs.

ALICE HUNT BARTLETT.

THE WAY

I CANNOT charm by witchery,
I cannot win with youth,
But I must walk to Olivet
Along the lanes of truth.

My morning smiles upon me
From disappearing skies:
My little dreams and ardors—
Are still, as noontide dies.

With many leagues to travel
With gold to guard and keep
Enfolded on the hillside
I stay and gather sleep.

HERBERT H. LONGFELLOW.

THE DUEL

ONCE I fought a shadow
In swift and gallant play.
She laughed at thrust and parry—
That dancing wraith of gray.

Our flickering sword blades circled
In whirls of phantom light.
It was a high adventure
With such a ghost to fight.

At last, too blindly lunging,
I pass her flashing guard
And pierced her misty bosom
With my impalpable sword.

The ways of air-born women
I do not understand
Nor how that wounded spirit
Left blood on my sword hand.

HAROLD T. PULSIFER.

Editor, *The Outlook*, N.Y.

THE ROAD TO CASTALY*

WHOEVER an eminent living American poet may have had in his thoughts when he lamented the present multiplicity of verse-artisans—

> " Who fashion, in a shrewd mechanic way,
> Songs without souls, that flicker for a day,
> To vanish in irrevocable night "—

he was certainly not thinking of Miss Alice Brown, whose poems—first issued in 1893, now in their fifteenth and enlarged edition—have souls as various and vivid as their subjects. The poet combines dramatic powers of characterisation with a swift responsiveness to beauty—whether of landscape, spirit, thought or action—a lyrical gift with a keen analytical faculty.

Not easy is the task of the critic who would in the same moment summarise Alice Brown to her own countrymen who already know her well, and to readers throughout the British Empire where she is known—if at all—only as a novelist. To the latter, *The Book of Love* (a remarkable sonnet sequence), *The Immortal Witnesses* (a blank verse drama depicting Sophocles in his majestic old age), *Sunrise on Mansfield Mountain*, *Hora Christi*, *The Flight of the Fairies*, *Wood Longing* and *The Return*, can, as yet, be nothing but tantalising names; for to quote a line here and there to indicate the whole would be no more use than to send a native of Central Africa a blade of grass and a pressed primrose as a picture of English spring.

We often hear it said that " Art is self-expression." It would be nearer the truth to say " Art is self-forgetfulness "—the transcending of personal limitations by the magic power of sympathy. But just as the heroic leader may fan to a flame the spark of nobility in the hearts of lesser men, but cannot draw blood from a stone, so the self-forgetful artist can reveal to others the significance of life and death, time and eternity, only if those others themselves desire the revelation.

Not " Realism," the squalid artificial cult of ugliness *à la mode*, but Reality, the evocation of lasting beauty from the drama of transitory life, is Miss Brown's achievement in her *Ellen Prior*, a

* *The Road to Castaly* and Later Poems. By Alice Brown. New York: The Macmillan Co. 15th edition. *Ellen Prior*. By Alice Brown. The Macmillan Co. New York, 1923.

soul-drama far more concentrated, impressive and uplifting than Mrs. Browning's *Aurora Leigh*.

> " The tale begins with a New England Spring,
> A cloud, a breeze, a leaf, a bluebird's wing—
> All that resides, most fleeting and most fair,
> In exquisite renewal: branches bare
> Limned with brown buds, sealed over swelling green,
> Twigs nebulous in mist, dark boles dim seen
> Behind an arrased web of underbrush,
> A robin's plaint across the twilight hush,
> Out of melodious space the hylas calling,
> Sunshine through rain and rain through sunshine falling."

This Arcady, in its

> " glamour such as woodland magic weaves
> Of quivering light ringed round by lustred leaves,"

is invaded by the human passions of innately different natures: Ellen Prior,

> " slim, golden, ivory, fair,
> The sun's bright envious arrow on her hair,"

innocent, self-sacrificing, tragically vulnerable, sublimely forgiving; and her rival, Lilla Rose,

> " drunken with the greed
> That sips at life, more life, and turns to feed
> On wilder fruit from some exotic tree,
> As if mere avidness bred ecstasy."

All the characters in the story stand out in the reader's memory long after the book is closed; and, while reading, the writer is forgotten in the poignancy of her creations.

This power to lose herself in her subject is evident also in her lyrics.

Listen first to *The West Country Lover** :—

> " Then, Lady, at last thou art sick of my sighing.
> Goodbye!
> As long as I sue, wilt thou still be denying?
> Goodbye!

* Only two verses out of four quoted, in this lyric, for lack of space.

Ah, well! shall I vow then to serve thee for ever,
And swear no unkindness our kinship shall sever?
Nay, nay, dear my lass! here's an end of endeavour.
Goodbye!

. . . . . .

My horse is my mate; let the wind be my master.
Goodbye!
Though Care may pursue, yet my hound follows faster.
Goodbye!
The red deer's a tremble in coverts unbroken.
He hears the hoof-thunder: he scents the death token.
Shall *I* mope at home, under vows never spoken?
Goodbye!"

Now change the key, the era, the soul. In mediæval Provençal literature, some of the most memorable poems are laments by ladies whose lovers have left them for the Higher Love, exchanging human joy and dalliance for the spiritual quest, the heroic fight to free Jerusalem: the pouring out of heart's blood on the burning sands of Palestine. But Miss Brown speaks for a Crusader who seeks Christ only because all mortal joy has turned to hopeless desolation:

"My love hath rid her of my patient heart.
(Wake not, O frozen breast!)
Yet still there's one to pour her oil and wine,
And all life's banquet counteth most divine.
O Thou, Who also hadst in joy no part,
Give me Thy rest.
What strength have I to cleanse Thy stolen tomb,
For Christendom's release?
Naked at last of hope and trust am I,
Too weak to sue for human charity.
A beggar to Thy holy shrine I come.
Grant me but peace."

Though the large number of editions *The Road to Castaly* has achieved in America, covering a period of over thirty years, affords a remarkable proof of steady popularity, it might not in itself suffice to promise permanence. The promise of permanence is from within; though, like all such promises, it remains conditional upon mankind not abdicating the conscious heritage of truth and beauty.

E. M. TENISON.

"HERE WE COME GATHERING . . ."

SONGS in a Strange Land (Sister M. Antony, Sands & Co.) are evidently composed in entire sincerity Through them all runs a deep sense of that half mystical adoration that rejoices to employ such earthly terms as "Spouse" and "Lover" to indicate the Christ. Judged as sacred verse they will probably give an uplifting joy to many a cloistered soul within convent walls; judged as poetry they are not without charm, but there is no original thought in their rhapsodies. They, however, forbid harsh criticism by reason of the evident ecstasy the writer experienced in compiling them. *St. Phocas*, by A. M. P. Dawson (Swarthmore Press), contains a poem on "Self-Expression," the last lines of which run thus :—

> "Nay, thou wilt ease thy soul,
> Thy man-child craves for birth,
> And kings will offer dole
> And angels hymn the earth
> For joy of urgent thought,
> For joy of the uttered word."

This seems a somewhat high claim for a singer, and *St. Phocas* and *St. Christopher* can scarcely be termed real poetry. *St. Christopher* is in that easy metre and has those facile rhymes that are apt to become "jog-trot," and then for a high-claiming poet the following will never do :—

> "The wide world wandered he
> And found a monarch passing strong
> And him he served with glee."

Kings will not bring doles nor angels hymn the earth for lines such as these. The sonnet *A Poet's Soul* ends on a feeble line, "Nor truth be lost in error's dismal night." Indeed; the work throughout is very unequal; the fifth stanza of *To the Yellow Crocus*, jars on a too many syllabled line, a positive ache to the ear; and where the *Good Friday* sonnet closes finely and sonorously the one to *Mother Nature* haltingly limps out on "In sunlit green the rhythmic new grass waves." In this there is no "joy in the uttered words," no "joy of the urgent thought" for the reader, there appears to be no feeling in the author for the delicate values of vowels and the melody that rises from their proper echo and recurrence.

One is forced to the conclusion that many volumes of verse are published because the poems were so much admired in the home circle or amid the little coterie of friends, but the prophet of old

never uttered his message until he had endured the silences and the deprivations of the wilderness, and the poet needs as severe self-discipling and as close a communing with the spirit of solitude if he is to force men to hear him. The *Flowers of Pilgrimage*, by W. M. Teape (Heffer), were certainly gathered on an easy pilgrimage. And, though there may be nothing new under the sun, yet need we have to endure such weary old echoes as " Shine out, shine out, my Hesperus " ? or such uninformative information as " The drops float down the river, The river to the sea " ? and how, even with poetic licence, do drops float ? Of course, if the writer had seen a river flowing *away* from the sea it might have included floating drops and all manner of strange things and had been worth mentioning. Then, what awkwardness there is in :

" O Mother who mournest thy fisher-boy lost,
His mates thee with pale faces tell."

This last line might serve for one of those sentences placarded up in omnibuses with " Can you read this ? " printed beside it. The author seems fond of these elliptical feats, here is another :—

" I witless seem, but glanced
The Shaft ? Did wit my Queen ? "

We cannot answer that conundrum, it defeats us entirely, nor do the following lines convince us of anything except an intolerable giddiness :

" Full moon, full moon, Two noons of moon
Above the sweltering ocean wide
Her face between
In change too seen
Itself my moon o'er this heart's swoon
To hold me while we each confide."

All this without even one comma to give pause in which to attempt to understand the moons and the changing face and the confiding in swoons ! Small wonder the Ocean sweltered ; we can sympathise with Father Neptune heartily.

Songs of Deliverance (Longmans) are unsigned ; they appear to be hymns for Christian Scientists and cannot be pronounced to be poetry. Such stanzas as :—

" When we to Spirit pay that heed
Which is our only wisdom, see

How contests end, and all is done
In quietness and unity."

And

"Nay, but from that human fear
Christian Science brings release,"

are merely chopped prose of the prosiest order. If the ear of a Christian Scientist can feel pain it must suffer unspeakable twinges at the repetition of these Songs.

The dedication of *Stolen Hours*, by Evelyn Eaton (Selwyn & Blount), contains a forebodement, because the heart sinks at facing "old faded dreams uprooted from the drifts," nor do we quite comprehend how a dream can be rooted in a drift. Then we come upon a foreword by Hugh Macnaughten, who says that Sappho would have liked these uprooted dreams that grew in drifts. We have no especial knowledge of Sappho's inclinations or whether she was easily pleased. Three lines at the top of a long blank page and four lines heading many other equally blank pages is nothing but an affectation, and these three lines—

"Oh Woman with the sapphire-shadowed eyes,
Have pity on the loneliness that lies
Within my heart at sunset and sunrise"—

what are they but an affectation? a scrap that any writer might have scribbled and afterwards destroyed as meaning little or nothing? Is a heart lonely (we are weary of these lonely hearts) and only to be pitied at sunset and sunrise? In any case if the sunrise is at three or four o'clock in the morning the "sapphire-shadowed eyes" would probably be fast closed in sleep and the lonely heart have wandered into drift-rooted dreams. If, as the foreword declares, these collected lines were written between the years of sixteen and twenty why did not some wise elder destroy half of them? What is to be said of this:—

"Only the gray
Of day
And sky,
Mist on the sea
And he
And I."

We can but finish it with:—

"O lor'
No more!"

The Fancy Ball, by Lady Ashmore (Foulis), calls for no criticism; you cannot break a butterfly on the wheel. The volume is composed of rhymes and themes suitable to Christmas annuals, or, perhaps to artless maidens resembling the picture on the cover.

II.

Shores of Lyoness, James Dryden Hoskens (J. M. Dent); *The Windy Post*, V. I. Phillips (Heffer & Sons); *The Secret Flowers*, Cyril C. Taylor (Grant Richards); *Plummets*, Henry Allsopp (Nisbet); *Fireside, Countryside and other Poems*, G. F. Brady (Humphrey Milford)—five volumes of verse by authors who have really something to say. The same high level is not at all times maintained, but all have a claim to be listened to. *Shores of Lyoness* commences with a dramatic poem on Marlowe, which contains much that is fine. The Prologue is a strong and delicate poem, and the lines that Marlowe is supposed to have written (a courageous attempt on the part of the author to equal Marlowe!) if somewhat too drawn out in length, have great thoughts within their paces, and the final discovery by The Wandering Jew of Christ "within myself, Familiar as common light and air," is finely conceived. Of the rest of the poems many of them are gay and manly with the air and sunshine of our English lanes. Very poetical are *Nahore* and *Tregeale's Night*. It is a matter of wonder that some quite unworthy lines are retained in some poems, but the author confesses that :—

> "I found I had for these
> My worst of pieces such a care, that I
> Compare it with the love a parent knows
> Who has some crippled children."

Quite so, but only the most fatuous of parents parades a crippled child before the public. There are but fifteen poems in *The Windy Post*, and several of these quite short and simple, but they are delicate songs of the moor and a touch of the mysterious runs through them, the elusive mystery that none but a poet can perceive. *The Pixies* is a charming fairy fantasy.

Mr. Cyril Taylor in publishing *The Secret Flowers* would, we think, have been well advised to wait until he had written more. The acceptance by periodicals of stray poems is no indication of their final worth, and from these few efforts we glean a promise of more enduring work if the author sets out with stern purpose and meticulous sifting of thoughts. *Nothing at All* is a taking little rhyme, but not to be included in a volume of lasting work. *Stranger and Lovelier*

Still falls off in the last verse and conveys the impression that the author was too much in love with his title, and the weavings in and out of that same title, to achieve the underlying note of real discovery that should be there.

Plummets has some good virile work, notably the lines *Nature to a Poet* and *From a Train*, *The Shepherd's Wife* and others. *Manikin* is written after the manner of *Hiawatha*, and that form does not, in our opinion, produce the best poetry. The roundels here and there are dancing and lute-like, and there are poems in which the author has expressed thought worthy of utterance and an utterance worthy of the thought. The drama with which the volume concludes is formless and unconvincing. Even Shelley's high Muse stumbled when he forced her to drag a fierce tirade against existing things, and here also the handmaid of Henry Allsopp has not been able to carry successfully the denunciations of his mind.

The unpretentious looking volume of *Fireside, Countryside and other Poems* contains, nevertheless, some good music. *The Night Hounds*, *Lyoness* and *The Nine Barrows*, are romantic poems but good romance; the poems of the *Countryside* could only have been written by one whose heart was in pulsing sympathy and understanding with trees, birds and rippling waters; whether much of this Nature poetry has not been uttered before, either less musically or more powerfully, is a question for the pondering over by the author; the road to every publisher should bear the warning notice that true poetry is never the easy singing of the care-free minstrel.

ARTHUR HOOD.

GREEK TRAGEDY IN ENGLISH FORMS.*

To those who know the original a translation is never entirely satisfactory, yet were it not for interpreters the works of the old Greek dramatic poets would be known to the multitude by name only. The plays themselves are like gold coins that are current in all countries, yet each translator has imprinted the image and superscription of his own personality upon them. That of Mr. Gilbert Murray is easily recognised, and his new volume needs little introduction. It fulfils all our expectations of a translation that gives us faithfully, not only the sense, but also the imagery beautifully re-woven into a new poetic whole.

* *The Choephoroe of Æschylus.* Translated by Gilbert Murray. *The Oresteia of Æschylus.* Translated by R. C. Trevelyan (Allen and Unwin). *The Women of Troy, The Bacchae,* and *The Ion of Euripides.* Translated by F. A. Evelyn.

Mr. R. C. Trevelyan essays another method of interpretation, giving us a more literal translation in blank verse. His own explanation is perhaps the best. He says : " My object in this translation has been to reproduce as faithfully as I can . . . not only the meaning but the form, phrasing and movement of the original. . . . I have tried to imitate as closely as possible the metrical pattern and phrasing in such a way that one musical setting would fit both the Greek and English words." To lovers of poetry the result is somewhat disappointing, for it would seem that each language requires its own form of expression, and where imagery is forced into an alien rhythm the poetry is lost. In its stead there shows an infinite painstaking that should be, not absent, but invisible.

The third author treads hard on the heels of Mr. Murray, for his work is full of sympathy and his sense of beauty invariably true, even in the most poignant passages where one false note would destroy everything. The only point of regret is the removal of Hermes' Prologue to the end of *Ion*, for the prologue is far from being a hindrance to the student, and is, beside, so typical of the dramas of Euripides that its displacement is hardly atoned for by the insertion of the scholiast, helpful though that may be. Mr. Evelyn has surely attained to the heights of his ambition, voiced in one of the Dedications :—

> " Euripides, be this alone my pride,
> To lend my harp to thine immortal lay."

DRAMATIC AND NARRATIVE POEMS

THE number of lengthy dramatic and narrative poems now being published on which we have commented previously is a healthy sign of reviving interest in the long poem. Typical of the current ouptut are these six volumes :—*Proserpine and Midas*, by Mary Shelley, edited by A. Koszul (Humphrey Milford) ; *In the House of the High Priest*, by Claude Houghton (Daniel) ; *Zachy Trenoy*, by Ruth Manning Saunders (Selwyn and Blount) ; *The Prioress's Tale*, adapted from Chaucer, by S. D. Collingwood (Burns, Oates and Washburne) ; *I was a Stranger*, a Nativity Play, by V. D. Goodwin (Selwyn and Blount) ; *The Passing of the Queen*, by R. Newton and J. H. Blackie (W. Heffer and Sons).

The sensations uppermost in one's mind after reading Mary Shelley's Mythological Dramas are those of regret and gratitude —regret that they were not published in her lifetime, so that she

might have enjoyed a due reward of an appreciative reading public, and gratitude towards the editor who has now brought them to light. He has taken great pains to prove their authenticity in his introduction, at the same time confessing that they might have been allowed to speak for themselves. They assuredly do so, most exquisitely serving their primary purpose, that of forming a delicately classical setting for some of Shelley's perfect lyrics.

Mr. Houghton's unusual conception of the mentality of Judas is intensified in this new volume; indeed, the chief interest of the poem lies in the psychology of its characters. Annas and Caiaphas are also drawn with a searching pen. For those who have not yet read *Judas*, the appended summary of that play greatly facilitates the comprehension of *In the House of the High Priest.* It is a masterful piece of work.

Miss Ruth Manning Saunders has succeeded in more than one direction. She enlists the sympathy of her readers for might-be ordinary folk, she intermingles fact and faery most convincingly, her treatment of the rhymed couplet clears it of all reproach of monotony, and she proves herself a poet of no mean lyrical quality, especially in the final episode when Zach goes home.

The *Prioress's Tale* has lost little of its original charm in this modernised version, and gained much in lucidity. It is to be hoped the author will "translate" more of the tales, for the Chaucerian speech, though a corner-stone to the few, is a stumbling-block to many.

There are some beautiful passages in the Nativity Play, but it is a pity that the children so soon become prodigies, uttering words far beyond their wisdom and their years. The book is charmingly illustrated, and reveals both spiritual and poetic feeling. These culminate in the mother's lullaby, whose title, *The Hushed Hour*, is in itself a poem.

Mr. Newton's dry wit does not always reach the laughter level. Given, though, that his cast bring a spontaneous sense of humour with them, these little farces, when acted, should provide considerable amusement. The poems in the second half of the book, contributed by Mr. Blackie, show distinction. I particularly like *Prothalamium.*

EVELYN D. BANGAY.

A POET-PATRIOT

MR. F. H. FORTEY, of Bristol, has recently published, under the direct sanction, as I understand, of the Polish Government, a little book of selections from the works of Adam Mickiewicz, Polish poet-prophet and national leader. The selection is heralded by a most interesting biographical and critical preface by R. Dyboski, since embodied in his Ilchester Lectures at Oxford on Polish literature. Mickiewicz died of cholera at Constantinople in 1855, while organising a Polish force to fight against Russia, having for many years been exiled from the native land which he so ardently loved and so zealously championed and celebrated. Famous in his life-time, he has since his death been acclaimed as the national poet *par excellence*, the one man who in Poland's darkest hour kept alive the sure and certain hope of her ultimate independence. "*Contra spem opero*—I hope against all hope," says Prof. Dyboski, "may well be said to be the motto of the mystic belief in Poland's immortality which to Mickiewicz, as to the other two great poets, Slowacki and Krasinski, became the religion of his later days."

Mickiewicz belonged, of course, to the romantic school which dominated the poetry of his generation. The *Ballads and Romances* with which he made his *début* appeared in 1822, the year in which Byron completed and published the tragedy, *Werner*. His muse is nothing if not dithyrambic; his emotional tension is seldom relaxed; and to our modern taste his poems appear somewhat high-flown and rhetorical. But when just allowance is made, not only for the change of mood and method in poetic art, but for the burning sense of intolerable wrong under which the poet lived and sang, we cannot but endorse in great measure his compatriots' assurance of his greatness. On such points it is difficult to speak with confidence when one has only a translation to rely upon; when, too, the poet's life-work is represented by a selection occupying only some eighty pages.

The most interesting specimen given of the art of Mickiewicz is the improvisation scene from the mystic drama, *The Ancestors*, in which Conrad, a Polish prisoner in a Russian dungeon, "carried by inspiration to heights of tragic 'hybris,' faces God Himself and asks Him, with the boldness of genius, for a revelation of the divine meaning and aim of national disaster and suffering." The members of the Bath Centre had at a recent meeting the privilege of hearing the translator declaim this long and powerful scene, and were greatly impressed by the dramatic range and vigour of his impersonation.

The following quotation from near the close of Conrad's mono-

logue will afford a glimpse of the quality of Mickiewicz as transmitted by Mr. Fortey's version :—

> Silent ? Art Thou still silent ? . . . Now I know
> All that Thou art—the secret of Thy power.
> How wise was he who found that Thou art Love !
> I only find that Thou art—Intellect !
> With mind not heart shall people know Thy ways ;
> With mind not heart Thy weapons understand ;
> And only he who delveth deep in books,
> Metals and figures, corpses, skeletons,
> Shall through a kindred spirit know Thy power !

CHARLES WHITBY.

FOR THE GLORY OF WALES

THIS is the anniversary of the appearance of the South Wales number of The Poetry Review—a date memorable to the Anglo-Cymric school of poets. It is memorable, since it was the first time that the English readers were given the opportunity of judging some of the work of some of the poets of that school. This is said advisedly. For the poems were not the choice of the poets themselves, and only represented some of those who replied to an invitation made in the public press. A finer and much more representative volume could have been produced under other circumstances. That number was memorable, also, because it produced a right royal controversy as to the comparative merit of the poets who write in Welsh, and those who use English as their medium. The dispute woke echoes from Denbigh to Cardiff and from London to St. David's (a stray echo of it was heard only a couple of weeks ago in the *Liverpool Post*). The controversy was in essence largely a revival of the old feud between North and South ; and the advocates of " Welsh for the Welsh " used the South Wales number as a cover, from behind which they could shoot a few irritating arrows at their traitorous fellow-countrymen !

But even the Editor of the review that contested our right to be considered patriots and poets was compelled, under pressure of the counter attack upon him, to make the following admission about those who figured in the South Wales number : " Every one knows that Mr. Prys Jones writes poetry with force and gets music into it ; Mr. Idris Bell is, of course, a first-rate translator ; Wil Ifan has a rare lyric gift, and the first three stanzas of *Ceinewydd*, in The

Poetry Review are nearly perfect; Sarnicol always writes poetry; and Huw Menai has mysterious promise. . . ."

That testimony seems ample justification for any little production of a local anthology, and from the reasonable contention that every poet should, for the glory of Wales, bring his gifts into the common stock—regardless of the medium of their expression—since the soul of a nation is greater even than its language.

This testimony has been reinforced, in a marked degree, by the appearance of the collected poems of Mr. A. G. Prys Jones under the title: *Poems of Wales* (Blackwell, Oxford, 2s. 6d.), which has just made its appearance. This poet is no stranger. I first made his acquaintance in the pages of The Poetry Review. It was in a charming poem entitled *The Everlasting Arms*. I was so impressed by it that I read everything over his name that I saw published. And I was not disappointed: for he was not a man of one poem, but a creative artist of a high order. This is, I venture to think, the finest poetic work published by any Welshman using English as his medium; and taking it as a whole, I doubt whether many volumes have seen the light in England that can claim a higher and more unvarying standard of excellence.

There seem to be three outstanding characteristics of his work—colour, music, and intense nationalism, bred of his country's history and beauty. Sometimes the whole three are finely blent together in the same lyric. Take, for example, this from *Palestine*:

> Gallant Knights of Christendom riding out together
> Down along the scorching plain, through the breathless noon;
> Hauberk-mail of burnished steel, lance and plume a-feather,
> And archers out of Cymric hills marching by the moon.
>
> Brazen drums of Araby, strident bugles calling,
> Calling from Damascus unto golden Babylon;
> Saladin and Saphedin; and flaming Acre falling,
> And all the gates of Ascalon a-shimmer in the sun.

or this of the Welsh:

Their sword is made of an olden song, their armour out of a dream,
They have seen in the rills of a thousand hills the word of the lightning gleam,
Their dream is the soul of a man unbound from birth to Eternity,
And the song of the sword is the sounding chant of the psalm of liberty.

In some of the poems he uses but the minimum of words to express his thought, as in *Tides*:

Sailing out of the dark,
O little ships, to the light,
And never too small or frail a bark
To sail to the Infinite!

That the poet has a whimsical humour is seen in such poems as his *Evan Tom*:

Old Evan Tom the sexton
Was three-score years and ten,
He'd put away more people
Than he'd ever see again:
Two hundred he had laid to rest
In this benighted spot . . .
And a man who lives on funerals
Has none too bright a lot.

Perhaps I may add a personal touch—for we are all interested in personalities—that the poet is a Master of Arts of the University of Oxford, a scholar of Jesus College, was sometime a Master at Dulwich College, and is at present an Inspector of Schools in West Wales.

LEWIS DAVIES.

A SONG OF GLAMORGAN

FOR SAINT DAVID'S DAY.

THE glories of Devon have oft been sung
By poet and by singer,
On golden bells they have oft been rung—
And proud has been the ringer:
Lynton, Lynmouth, and Ilfracombe,
Where the sea-mews dart in,
Lee, where the foaming breakers boom,
Clovelly, and Combe Martin.

Though jewelled be the coast of Devon,
Against a Devon host
I'll chant the glories, seven times seven,
Of our Glamorgan coast;

For, facing bold the Devon land,
Radiant in her dower,
Beauty and story hand in hand,
Stands bewitching Gower.

Oxwich, Rhossili, Penrice,
Caswell, Clyne, Pwllddu,
Langland, Bracelet—pearls of price
Above a sapphire sea ;
While Eastward o'er the Hirwain hills
Lies many a fruitful vale,
Like the silvered vale of Neath that thrills
To the song of the nightingale.

So while one note my voice can raise,
One whole string to my lyre,
Our own Glamorgan will I praise
With sweep of Cymric fire :
Since a magic strand I can command,
And of it hold the key,
What is the glamour of Dunkerry land,
Or the dale of the Doones to me ?

LEWIS DAVIES.

Are we losing the power to tell a story whether in prose or verse, the ability to stir the reader's imagination by the sheer sequence of events ? To-day writers aim at analysis of motive and sensation rather than at representation of action. In past ages what man wanted was a story, fresh and stirring, to tickle his imagination. Saga was the fashion then as the psychological novel is now. It matters nothing to the worth of the literature whether an author has concentrated most on the plot or on the psychology, but some of the narrative verse recently published suggests the remark: let him beware how he tries to treat both as of equal importance. Physical facts at their most vigorous, mixed up with an ever-present mentality, do not produce the artistic effect in literature which they do in an ancient tapestry, where we see knights tilting, while in a sort of marginal note embroidered round the centre-piece are depicted symbols of their thoughts and ambitions, a crown, a fair lady, or an ancient castle.

TOWARDS THE LAUREL WREATH.

The Premium Editor's Report.

A premium competitor who gained distinction in this page recently with a poem that was printed in our last issue provides us with a fitting title for this report. "I have stood within the shadow of the laurel crown," she writes, adding "I do entirely agree with your remarks in the last report, and feel it is indeed more blessed to stand a doorkeeper in the House of Beauty than to reign a shoddy tin god on a suburban altar . . . Verse can be clad in garments ready-made (frequently second-hand); but a poet must dream and garner beauty before he can weave his song." One complaint we have against many, even among the best, of the poems that come for our inspection from all parts of the world is that too frequently ready-made phrases and the images mar otherwise individual work. In an ambitious lyric describing "A Vision of Fair Poets" we are suddenly pulled up by "No sooner said than done"; "I heave a sigh" is a line from an arch piece of light verse, otherwise quite successful. "Angelic songs exultantly proclaim," with other similar lines following, marks the descent into the trite of a dignified poem that begins well. A more common limitation of the polished artificer whose work we have to place in our third class in subjectivity. The personal rather than the universal theme—what "I" felt and dreamed, obsesses the Georgians. They strike the minor key persistently. We want more bracing, manly utterances. "Tell me not in mournful numbers."

We do not write disparagingly. We are in receipt of an exceptionally large number of poems, and the greater part of them gives us pleasure and humility. Theophile Gautier, in his appreciation of the poetry of Villon, has emphasised the delight and interest obtainable from the examination of the lesser poets, in whom may be found novelty, originality and eccentricity foreign to the work of the recognised masters who have established and observed a convention. Gautier would have revelled in being our Premium Editor, for he delighted in "the absence of ready-made judgments for every striking passage" and was alive to the joy that a single fine line may awaken—all the greater because the less expected. When we can spare the time between closing day and going to Press to take out the fine lines to be discovered in the equivalent of a volume of 150 pages we will make a feature of them. In the meantime we do not wish our task to grow lighter. This feature of The Poetry Review has been famous for many years, and the standard of work submitted has risen steadily to a high level and is judged by a high standard.

Hence our disappointment at the occasional intrusion of the trite and stitled phrase and the persistence of the minor note in otherwise fine work.

A moiety of the premium goes to Miss Helen Ives Gilchrist, Cleveland, Ohio, for two poems of real distinction of phrase, imagery and rhythm; the other moiety is divided between Miss Phœbe Fenwick Gayle (Chelsea) for "The End of the Journey," in which individuality of treatment is marked, and a simple, exact piece of imagery, "Autumn," by Miss E. Fleming (Ely).

The honours list includes Joy Malden (Hove), who conceives a lark "bearing the truant soul" (of Francis Thompson) "back from its endless games among the stars"; Honor Bolmfield (Paris), for a picturesque little gloss on "How Many Miles to Babylon?"; Wm. Borrie (Glasgow), for an exact picture of "An April Evening"; E. Joyce Harrison (Lincoln), who surprises us with a novel conception of "Clouds" in six lines; Honor F. Leeke (Alton), for another exquisite etching; Charles G. Mortimer, Stoneyhurst, for gracious sonnets, and V. le Maistre, Oxshott.

An unusual number of contributors deserve special commendation for their artistry, simplicity, sincere feeling. They deserve the recognition of print, but The Poetry Review would need to be twice as large as printing charges will allow to accommodate them. Among them is a group of Glasgow writers who will do honour to that great city—Nancy Pollk, Hugh Montgomerie, A. Macphail, William Borrie, whose "Indictment" is too sweeping and unrelieved, and William McDermott, who does not keep the promise made by his fine opening verse:

> I had a dream of gramarye:
> I dreamt that Death had died,
> And Truth and Beauty hand in hand
> Walked by the bier-side.

In this honourable class must be placed also Blanche Jones (Margate), who should develop her fragmentary conversation in a garden and whose verses "To K. A." seem to have a personal reference to this page:

> "Your wish shall happen through a friend,"
> The promise thrills me on my way;
> For I have wishes without end.
> Are you my friend to-day?
>
> Will it distress you if I gain
> The prize, when you are fair to me,

And judge me with unfettered brain,
And cheer my minstrelsy ?

Beyond my dreams the promise goes,
For dreams and flattery have an end ;
Intense the wish for friendship grows,
If you will be my friend.

J. T. Forbes, Chelmsford ; M. E. Graham, Stirling ; E. A. Fielder, Horsham ; E. P. Nickalls, Rugby ; Percy Cash, Ceylon, who is assured that overseas readers are not at a disadvantage ; MSS., received too late for inclusion in our premium award, are carried forward to the following judgment day ; M. E. Chapman, New Eltham, who runs to excessive length ; Maris Johns, Harrogate ; H. E. Holland, Hampstead ; Lucy Malleson, Kensington ; M. Crosbie, Wolverhampton ; John Cook, Lenzie, who forsakes modernity for an eighteenth century manner and does not gain in effectiveness thereby ; S. M. Goode, Croydon ; Joan Warburg, Kensington ; Vera Arlett, Worthing ; A. D. L. Wilson, Bedford ; J. Atkinson, Tamworth ; M. Allison, South Kensington ; N. Allport, Stratford-on-Avon ; Freedom Kabraji, Bombay ; A. W. Gough, Clifton ; M. T. Witney, Rotherham ; G. D. Reeves, Highgate ; M. E. Proctor, High Barnet ; I. Petch, Kirbymoorside.

Among the younger people who contribute the following are commended and advised to turn their attention to the Junior Verse Competition announced in this issue : C. F. E. Thomson, Aberdeen, who submits a finely developed sonnet ; and E. M. Harrison, Lincoln.

* * *

The usual general premium of £2 for the best poem or poems submitted to the Premium Editor during the month (without limitation of subject) is continued, and six books will be awarded to the " highly commended."

Not more than *two* poems may be submitted at the same time.

Every entry must be certified as original and as not having appeared in print, and the name and address of the competitor must be attached to the MS.

If criticism is desired, 2s. 6d. and a stamped addressed envelope must be enclosed. (If a more detailed postal criticism is desired, 5s. and a stamped addressed envelope should be sent.)

Entries must be either typewritten or written in ink on one side of the paper only, and contributors must be members of the Poetry Society or registered postal subscribers to The Poetry Review.

All MSS. submitted for premium awards should be addressed to "The Premium Editor." Entries cannot be returned, but they must remain at the disposal of the Editor (whether awarded a premium or not) until after the issue of the next number of THE POETRY REVIEW, in which the award will be published, and they may be published in THE POETRY REVIEW or elsewhere at the Editor's option.

* * *

TWENTY GUINEAS ($100) IN PREMIUMS.

Our Associate Editor's offer of fifty dollars for a City Sonnet has now been increased to $100 or twenty guineas as premiums (one major award and several minor or regional awards at the discretion of the Adjudicators) for the best City Sonnets,—poems in sonnet form descriptive of the individuality, soul and charm of any town, a wide interpretation being given to the term "city," which may be taken to embrace one's home town, however apparently insignificant, as well as the big capital cities of the world.

All entries must be addressed as before to Mrs. Bartlett (27, West 67th Street, New York, U.S.A.) in envelopes endorsed "City Sonnet" in top left-hand corner before May 31st, 1924, an extension of date to meet the wishes of Far-East contributors.

A CHILDREN'S VERSE CONTEST: SIXTY BOOK PRIZES

Arising out of our treatment of Poetry for Children and Young People's Verse, and especially as an expression of interest in the article by Mrs. Winder in the January issue of THE POETRY REVIEW, Mrs. Clover Boldt Miles, of Park Avenue, New York, provides us with ten dollars on behalf of her 13-year-old daughter, Clover Wotherspoon Miles, as the nucleus of a Junior Verse Contest. Instead of offering money prizes the Poetry Society thinks it desirable to increase the premium so kindly offered by Mrs. Miles, and devote the money to the provision of suitable book prizes. In this way we are able to inaugurate the first of a series of Young People's Premiums by offering, in conjunction with the publishers concerned, a substantial number of desirable books, including the two notable anthologies on which Mrs. Winder's article was based. Messrs. W. Collins, Son & Co. enable us to include as prizes for the premier awards twelve copies of Mrs. Meynell's *School of Poetry*; Messrs. Methuen add twelve copies of Mr. Philip Wayne's *Children's Book of Lyrics*, and Messrs. J. M. Dent & Son twelve copies of the *Junior Poetry Book* from their King's Treasury series (which we have recommended from time to time in THE POETRY REVIEW and

to teachers of verse speaking), supplemented by twelve copies each of *Little Folk* and *Fairy Folk*, by D. F. Dalston, recently a mistress at Streatham Hill High School, and *Rainbow Lanterns*, by Emily Lewis.

Half of these very desirable volumes, which would delight any child possessing imagination and literary taste, and would be of immense value in leading them along the pleasant paths of poesy, will be awarded for little poems by authors under 11 years of age, and the remainder will be reserved for contributors between the ages of 11 and 16 years. It is proposed that the first prize in each section shall be one of each of the books offered, the other 25 in each case being utilised for 25 minor awards in order of merit. Not more than two poems may be submitted by or on behalf of any competitor, and each MS must bear the name and address of the writer and an endorsement of authenticity by a parent or teacher, who must be a member of the Poetry Society. School teachers, however, may send in batches of poems by their pupils, and in the event of any large number being received from any particular school an additional prize or prizes may be provided for the best poem or poems from any particular school or teacher, thus constituting a competition within the major general contest. All MSS should be addressed to the Children's Verse Editor, POETRY REVIEW, 16, Featherstone Buildings, London, W.C.1, on or before May 31, 1924. It is hoped that this may be the first of a series of similar contests, which are intended to assist in developing a sound taste in poetry and the gift of individual expression. Further classification in districts, etc., will be made in accordance with the development of the scheme. No correspondence can be entered into with regard to the merit of individual poems except under the regulations of the general premium offer.

Attention is drawn to previous Children's Verse causeries and articles on Children and Poetry which have appeared in THE POETRY REVIEW—*Real Georgian Verse*, a Selection of Poems by School and College Girls (January, 1918); *The Junior Order*, Poems by Children (March, 1918); *Children's Poems* (May, 1918); *Children and Poetry*, by Mrs. Alston (January and March, 1919); *Poetry in Schools*, by O. Channon Coolinge; and *Children's Verse and the Child's Mind*, by Phillipa Hole (July, 1921); *Children in Poetry* (November, 1921); *The Child in Verse*, by L. S. Wood; and a *Children's Causerie* (January, 1922); *Young Folk's Verse, Comment and Criticism* (July, 1922); *The Imagination of the Blind Child*, by J. M. Rowley; *The Child in Verse, II*, by L. S. Wood (September, 1922).

IN MEMORY OF KHAMA.

A Prize Poem by a Fort Hare Professor.

A FINE tribute to the late King Khama by Mr. D. J. Darlow, B.A., lecturer in English at the South African Native College, Fort Hare, and a representative of the Poetry Society in South Africa, has been bracketed first at the recent Cape Town Eisteddfod in the Bardic Chair Competition there. The judges state that the poem is "finely conceived and developed; it shows an intimate knowledge of, and sympathy with, native sentiment, and is of great South African interest."

The following extracts indicate the bold and lofty spirit and expression of the poem:—

"And art thou gone, O glorious Chieftain,
Art thou gone?
With near a hundred summers on thy brow,
And half a hundred on thy diadem—
O strong, lone soul,
That seemed beyond Time's reach,
Art gone, Great Khama, gone?

. . . . . .

"I sing a man who towered above his fate,
Whose foes were pigmies smiting at his knees,
Whose walk was steady in a swaying world.

. . . . . .

"'Twas such a world
He gazed at as his sires had seen unchanged
For generations. Lust walked unashamed,
And, wanton-eyed, sought satisfaction.
Hate turned to magic for its baneful aid,
And murder was religious sacrifice.
Fear haunted men in council and in feast;
Fear haunted women in the sun-scorched fields;
At night fear slunk pale-eyed behind the huts.
Badimo* waiting on the wizard's call
Glared ever by the pathways of their prey.
God spake:
'Let there be light in Bamangwato kraals.'

. . . . . .

Khama heard and Khama saw the light;
Khamane heard and by his brother's side
Chose Christ his King.

. . . . . .

* Evil spirits.

" Sekhome watched,
Proud of his long-limbed son, yet half afraid
Of the calm quiet of his steady eyes.
'His heart is white,' he said, 'and he will meet
The White men with a cunning like their own.' "

Then follows a stirring account of Khama's early prowess, his single-handed fight with a lion, his routing of the Matabele foes, his refusal to be intimidated by the witch doctors, and, when called to be chief, his forgiveness of his father, Sekhome, who had plotted against him :—

" And thus through treachery and wondering scoff
Great Khama chose the path that Christ had taught.
Midst exile, danger, poison-plot and hate,
He waited patiently, then took the throne ;
Recalled Sekhome, gave him royal place,
And when Khamane left the way of truth,
And treachery re-appeared, removed his folk
To far Botletle ; returned to claim his own
And rule, sole King. Then needed he a heart
Stronger than when he faced a lion alone
Or drove the Matabele with his spear,
The snares of superstition clogged his feet,
Suspicious ignorance weighed down his arms ;
And greedy Commerce, with its draughts of fire,
Refused obedience. But Khama's sight
Was clear, his will secure. Before him fell
Dim Witchcraft's gloomy sway, and drunken riot
Hastened from the land.
Through strife and hate
He gently walked unscathed. For heathen rite
In Harvest and in Spring he gave pure worship,
Praises unto God and trustful prayer.

. . . . . .

" And thus for fifty years he ruled the land
In Shoshong, Palapye, Serowe,
In justice constant. Danger from without
When burghers crossed his bounds, and royal rank
Seemed forfeit to the ruthless power that crept
To northward, ever seeking gems and gold,
He thwarted at the throne of Britain's Queen.
O, who shall tell how Khama crossed the seas,

How Britons flocked to see this Christian King,
And told the wonders of his reign of truth ;
How Khama marvelled at a land so green,
Such massive cities built with wealth untold ?
Instead of huts like ant-hills on the plain,
He gazed on London, boundless, street on street,
Houses and churches, grey, enveiled in mist
That Thames spreads o'er her, his supernal bride."

. . . . . .

EPILOGUE.

" What alchemy can change dull dross to gold ?
What miracle can lift a savage mind
To noble truth and wisest statesmanship ?
He was a root from out a barren soil ;
He in the Great Thirst Land, a well of life.
He left the terror of Badimo's* curse
And found the way to peace. Great Khama said :
' The love of Christ, to this I owe my all.'
A thousand monarchs on the turning wheel
Have paused a moment ere they plunged beneath.
A few have blazed in glory stained with blood ;
But Khama stood arrayed in purest white."

NOTES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE novelist as poet is not rare, but he is rarely so successful as Mr. Eden Phillpotts is in his *Cherry Stones*, which follows closely on the heels of the equally delightful *Pixies' Plot* (Grant Richards, 3s. 6d. net). They contain more matter and more metres than the professional Georgian poetry books. They are very musical, and are concerned chiefly with simple things, in the tender description of which old English words and phrases are embedded like jewels in gossamer, with here and there a starker tale, as *The Ruin* and *The Tragedy*, that reveals a kindlier Hardy. The Devon novelist's poems are *Pixies' Plots*, the corner of the garden reserved for the little people, who in return show goodwill, friendship and service.

You have it or you have it not :
The cantle of the Pixies' plot,
Where never spade nor hoe shall ply
To break that treasured sanctity.

* The evil spirits.

Touch no bloom there; uproot no weed;
Let what will blow.
Suffer the thistle, briar and thorn to grow,
The dandelion to seed.

* * *

Still virgin, free and set apart,
Ordain one dingle of your heart,
Where visions home and wing to you
The golden dreams that might come true.
Herein a gentler dawn than day
Shall often break
For foot-sore spirits, tired of reason's ache,
And children come to play.

For all his kindly, delicate rhymes, savouring of country sights and sounds, with an occasional excursion into a wider field, it is little Mr. Phillpotts asks:

When sun has set behind the hill
And comes the eternal dark to me,
Do thus, out of your charity
And fellowship and dear good-will.

First fire the time-worn clay and lime,
Then on this heath the ashes cast,
So that they crumble up at last
Under the fingers of the thyme.

There leave them without more ado
For fair calluna to enfold;
They'll turn one tormentil more gold,
One milkwort stain a deeper blue.

* * *

Since Allen Brockington published *The Nazarene* there has been a steady development in the humanisation of Jesus. Two beautiful new volumes illustrate the process and are notable additions to a steadily growing literature that seeks to reveal the personality of Christ. The Ryerson Press of Toronto present *The Miracle Songs of Jesus*, by Wilson MacDonald, in a most charming format. It is difficult to criticise these little verses. They are exquisite yet we feel they are not as successful as the author meant them to be. They just miss being a revelation. Or perhaps it is the reader's fault that each one fails to achieve a glad surprise in idea and expression. The shadow and the substance are indicated in the 12th and final verses, or rather, separate cameos:

And I am sure that John or Mary
Cared not a whit when He walked the sea.
But I am sure that they loved to tarry
And hear the Poet of Galilee.
And of the throng that around Him pressed
'Twas John and Mary that He loved best.

* * *

The Temple bells ring out to-day
And the Pharisees pray
In their ancient way,
And the lips of the preachers love to tarry
On the virgin birth and the miracle deed ;
But the temple bells I shall not need ;
For I am going with John and Mary
Out on the Hills with the slender throngs
Who love to hear the Miracle Songs.

Jesus of the Emerald is a narrative poem by Gene Stratton-Porter (Murray), in which the popular novelist graphically and dramatically elaborates the Lentulus legend of how a personal envoy of Tiberius carried out the Caesar's command to investigate the stories that had reached Rome about the Nazarene, and had a portrait of Him carved on an emerald. The wonderful part of this beautifully produced small volume is the description of the personal appearance of Jesus, based on the emerald "likeness," and the author's long, fascinating, and convincing *Afterword*. This is a "miracle song" to all who with Mrs. Stratton-Porter "do believe this picture of Jesus of the Emerald to be the closest reproduction up to this time of the race of the man who lived the life and performed the works that history proves were achieved by Jesus Christ. Loved to the depths of my soul by the spiritual appeal of this beautiful attempt to materialise Jesus as a physical man, the foregoing conception of how it might have been produced was born in my heart and brain, and because of the compelling power of the picture, I am moved to share it with all the world."

* * *

Mrs. Mends Gibson's reading of "wilderness poems"—fugitive pieces that blossom unheeded by the casual reader and the lazy anthologist—has provoked much discussion, not only on account of the beauty of the selections, but also because they were not labelled by authors' names. On this matter the Premium Editor had something to say last issue ; the idea will develop into an anthology of anonymous poems shortly that will be a challenge to

taste and a defiance to fashion. Many inquiries have been made as to the authorship of several of the remarkable poems read by our discriminating colleague. As some POETRY REVIEW poems were included, we feel hurt and humbled that they were not recognised. Evidently our pages are not read with the attention and judgment they deserve. *The Fig Tree*, about which the most curiosity has been shown, was published in our May-June, 1922, issue, above the signature of a contributor to this number. The theme of this exquisite poem is very differently treated in the first verse of *The Blessing*, by Mary Colborne-Veel, who is represented by several poems in the excellent *Book of Australasian Verse*, of which a new edition has just been published in the Oxford Standard Authors' series—that most desirable library of fine poetry.

The Master He was hungry :
"Shall we not dine," said He,
"On the good fruit amongst the leaves
Of this delightful tree ?"
But oh, the fig-tree bore no fruit.
"Wither," He bade it, "to the root,
For thus deceiving Me."

This is very literal compared with Arthur Hood's penetrating addition to the gospel incident.

* * *

The President of the Poetry Society prefaced his address on Shelley to the Kensington Centre's first January meeting with a reminder that the business of the Society is to promote "a clearer, deeper sense of the *best* in poetry," an aim, he knew, all the well-managed Centres kept steadily before them, allowing nothing that is trivial, base and self-seeking to enter into their programmes, which constituted a continuous course of poetic education. The Society raised the standard of taste in poetry, and opened the eyes of the blind who "needs must love the highest when they see it." He congratulated the Kensington Centre on its steady growth and increasing influence.

* * *

Members of the Poetry Society are reminded that in addition to any individual advantage they may obtain in direct return for their modest subscription they, as poetry-lovers, discharge a duty to the community. However slightly they participate in the Society's activities, they perform a service to poetry by their membership, enabling the Society as a body to represent them and assert the

importance of poetry in individual and national and even international life. The Society is a much bigger thing, with a broader, finer ideal, than the purely localised body, limited by self-gratification, circumscribed in its influence, incapable (to use a now popular term) of "a fine gesture."

* * *

The March meetings of the Poetry Society in Kensington are 13th: Mr. Patrick Braybrooke, "Chesterton as a Poet," at 5, Roland Houses; 27th: The Rev. John Hutton, M.A., D.D., "Francis Thompson," at 3, Earls Terrace. Non-members may attend on the payment of 1s. each towards Centre expenses. Members are earnestly requested to be punctual.

* * *

The Barnet meetings of the Poetry Society are:—March 13th, "Two Cantos of Mutabilitie" (1596 ?), by Edmund Spenser (1552-1598), Mr. W. H. White, at the Grammar School; March 28th: Spenser: Readings by members, at "The Orkneys," Manor Road; April 11th, "Antony and Cleopatra," at 30, Ravenscroft Park; April 25th: "King Henry VIII," at 33, Wood Street; May 8th, Poems on "Spring" and on "Birds," readings by members, at 35, Wood Street; May 23rd, Mrs. Alice Meynell, Miss Maud Mace, at the Grammar School. The President, Sir Owen Seaman, has kindly presented to the Library a copy of each of his works. Books may be borrowed at any meeting, and should be returned at the next meeting.

* * *

The annual business meeting of the Hampstead Centre was held on February 5th, when the following officers and Committee were declared duly elected for the year:—President, the Rev. A. H. Lee, M.A.; Vice-President, Miss Lilian Lloyd; Treasurer, Mrs. Aynsley; Secretary, Mr. J. F. Tilly; Assistant Secretary, Miss F. Huntsman; Committee, Miss Julie Huntsman, Miss Montague, Miss Solomon, and Mr. F. V. Blows. Miss F. Huntsman and Mr. Blows were elected as delegates to the annual business meeting of the Society. The reports of the Treasurer and Secretary were presented and were considered very satisfactory.

The following programme has been arranged:—

March 4th: Irish Poets.

March 18th: Sunset and Dawn.

April 1st: Members' Special Evening. Reading of Fletcher's "Hassan," under the direction of Miss Montague.

April 15th: Byron Centenary: Scenes from Plays and Lyrics.

May 6th : Dryden's " All for love."

The meetings are held at Miss Julie Huntsman's Studios, 150, Finchley Road, N.W.3., at 7.45 p.m. Further information respecting the work of the Centre can be obtained from Mr. J. F. Tilly, 32 Camden Square, N.W.1. (telephone : North 709.)

* * *

We have pleasure in mentioning that a prize of fifty dollars ($50), to be known as the " Edgar Allan Poe Prize," will be given through the Baltimore Circle of Bookfellows to a subscriber to " The Circle " for the best lyric, not over twenty-eight lines, submitted to Leacy Naylor Green-Leach, 1613 Bolton Street, Baltimore, Maryland, U.S.A., before July 31st. Entries must never have been published before nor may be during the period of contest except in " The Circle." Not over two lyrics may be submitted by same contestant. Each poem must be type written, with name and address of author in upper left hand corner of each page of manuscript. A stamped and self-addressed envelope must be enclosed for return of poem if unavailable, if its return is desired. Those not yet subscribers to " The Circle " who wish to submit entries will please send an annual subscription of $1.00.

* * *

At the February meeting of the Poetry Society in Chelsea, Mr. E. V. Knox read a paper on " Parody," of which subject he is our greatest modern exponent. The author of *Parodies Regained* and " E.V.O.E." of *Punch*, gave great pleasure to a crowded audience.

On March 11th, Mr. John Drinkwater is to speak on " Some Aspects of Poetry." The lecturer for the April meeting has not yet been definitely arranged, but notices will be sent to all members of the Chelsea Centre.

* * *

The Chelmsford Centre meetings continue to be most valuable and interesting. On January 23rd, after an introductory paper by Miss E. M. Bancroft, members read Browning's *Paracelsus*. On February 27th, " Matthew Arnold " was introduced by Mr. W. H. Creasey.

Members are asked to note forthcoming meetings :—

March 19th.—Greek Play (English translation).
April 9th.—Details announced later.
June 17th.—At 7 p.m., Shakespeare's *As You Like It.*

* * *

The Poetry Society in Reigate continues to flourish, and a keen interest is shown in the meetings. Several very delightful afternoons

have been arranged. The year ended with a splendid reading of *Twelfth Night* by members. The January meeting on the "Eighteenth Century Poets" was taken by Mrs. Uloth, and the meeting for February was on "The Minor Poetry of Milton," Mr. Capper giving a short paper and notes on the passages he has selected for his readings. It is hoped that Canon Levitt will take the March meeting.

The Centre would like to place on record its regret at the resignation of Mr. G. W. Rundall, its first President, who has long left the neighbourhood. Mr. Rundall gave invaluable help in launching this little barque on an untravelled sea and guided it through the early years if its journeying, handing it safely into the capable and kindly leadership of Mr. Brainerd Capper, its present head. M. E. Mason, Secretary.

* * *

The meetings of the Poetry Society in Bath have been of great interest and very well attended during this session. Prison Poems, The Stuarts and the Poets, George Herbert, T. E. Brown, A. H. Clough and Michael Field are the subject-matter of the papers read this winter. Mr. Fortey, of Clifton, entertained the members by reading a very good paper on Polish Poetry; and Miss Regnis gave readings from Charles Cayzer, a little-known poet and dramatist.

* * *

The weekly readings in the Service of Poetry, on Mondays, at 3.15 p.m., at the Royal Chapel of the Savoy, W.C.2 (by special arrangement with the Rev. Hugh Chapman, Chaplain and Vice-President of the Poetry Society), are continued during March and April, as follows :—

March 10th.—Mr. Lewis Hind : "Francis Thompson."

March 17th.—Mr. John Bailey : "Matthew Arnold."

March 24th.—The Rev. N. Kynaston Gaskell : "The Story of the other Wise Man."

March 31st.—Commander Carlyon Bellairs, M.P. : "Poetry and Politics."

April 7th.—Mr. W. F. Rawnsley : "Wordsworth."

April 14th.—Mr. Galloway Kyle : "The Life of Christ in Poetry."

April 21st, Easter Monday.—No reading.

The readings are open to all who care to attend.

THE LAST OF THE GOTHS

LAST light like a heron's wing lay over Spain :
Late winds mowed th' lemon groves like silver scythes,
Swept pathways through the patient cypress woods
While Roderick, the last Gothic King of Spain,
An outcast, vanquished—in a friar's brown frock—
Leant on a gate and looked on his lost realm.
The light lay westward like flat paving-stones,
Seaward to Finisterra's silver horn,
Like a floated street of pearl along the dusk
Which the vanquished saints had walked on, leaving Spain.

From the rocky hill where Roderick stood, the land
Fell scarped away, he could look down through vaults
Of dusk-bound, raftered orchards, witches' glades,
Gnarled barn-like roofs of mossed grey timber-work,
Dim-lit with carven lemons ;—he could look
Down slant lawns of last emerald, under caves
Of gold-burred Spanish chestnuts, tufted, bossed,
With leaves like tiger's stripes and brassy fruits,
Down to the sainted plains that had been his.

There hung the cities with their little spires,
Small hives of tessellated golden cells
That hold men's honey—neat mosaics of streets,
Tight halls and city squares. They held the wealth—
Silk, lace, and glass, and wine and glowing fruit—
Packed in deep willows, orchard-gold of Spain
From their terraced fruit-gardens like flanking stairs,
About them. The cold wind met Roderick's cheek.
And he had lost his good horse, stolen from him
By Witiza, his enemy—even his horse.
Those cities he had lost gleamed out below
Like clustered quartz needles—against the night,
Like ships, loose-moored with steady clustered masts
They rode, rich-cargoed on the darkening air.
" I would not lose this land," thought Roderick.

He turned ; he would not look ; among the rocks,
On the northern side of the hill, he climbed, in thought,

Seeking a niche to sleep in. "Spain! my Spain!
I love you;—
Strange, shadowed elfin land that slip my grasp,
You were a lily-garden to us Goths,
Christ's lily-close, new-pleached, where robin, thorn,
Knew each the lovely emblem, of itself
Informed with sweet truth, wide aware in light!
The very dust of your white mountain roads,
Bright, crystalline, being blessed by pilgrim feet.
Your furzy uncouth moors, raising lily-crops
Of Gospel sowing.
Your bronze-stemmed ilex forests where fierce wolves
Range through these tawny rocks showing rare gold
Of little shrines, in rude wood gilt with love,
Madonnas of your forests, gently carved."

He lay down, lonely underneath a rock,
Drawing his monk's frock close about his knees.

He tried to sleep, but the night air turned cold—
And Sorrow, sleeping not, called on and on:
"Spain!—my lost Spain!
Oh, land!—you lay so lovely!—like a bride
In your new robe, outspread, glistening, pearled—
The robe of your new churches carved, frost-white,
Valencia, Compostella, Valladolid!
—Clean from their carvers' chisels,
—Those nameless village carvers who uphold
The realm of Christ on earth,
We kings but set the bounds: they hold the realm,
They bear the chalice in their faithful hands,
Heave up the lovely vase of blossoming stone,
Up through the silent centuries toward God.
Cordova, Seville, Huelva—Al'cante!
Such fabrics wrecked!

Oh land, no longer lovely, rifled bride!
Crumpled and stripped and shamed by a lewd thief,
That thief, my bitterest enemy—the Moor!—

Let in by night, by a low eastern door—
His devilish gnomish scymitar hooked in hate
Against us and our churches.
The Moor is not as we : his very flesh
Is ebony to our snow, and rose and fire.
Dark, cold, and smooth, next us : his crooked moon
Is not more opposite to th' incoming sun
Than is his wizard brain from the child-mind
Of my dear, new-touched people.
The sly upsliding of that goblin moon
When good men turn in sleep, and dream of day,
Is not more opposite, not more withdrawn
From the unargued, simple entrance of the sun
Than Moor from Goth : his day our night indeed.

Oh Roderick ! How much better had you fared
With Wulfila, great father of us Goths !
He took the Cross through frozen Dacia
And met for foes snow, wolves and ignorance,
The unhewn ice of fierce unlettered hearts,
Not the vile culture of a poisoned soil.
That ice could break with sundering crash and melt
With clash of icicles, like sabre-play
And sound of bells discovering greensward ;
That snowbound isle of green could break to flowers
—To the sky-bound gentian's tremendous blue :
So broke the heart of the North, to read God's Word ;
The groove amidst the opened double page
Of His translated Gospel in our script,
A furrow of bright-sifted seed, to raise
Fair Gospel wheat, the lily in the ear.
The wide blue eyes of heroes that had loved
The ice-grey eyes of Odin could love Christ.
Thews trained by Thor the Thunderer could be brave
For the sake of Christ, brave in Gethsemane.
Eyes that had wept for Baldur, beautiful,
For whom trees shed their leaves, as men their tears,
Well could they weep for Jesus.
Those gold-haired drinkers of the golden mead,

Dwellers in gold-thatched halls,
My brothers, Sigurd, Grettir, and Burnt Njal,
Could be great Christians—men of marble limb.
Oh, where great Wulfila set the holy Rose,
There might it stand and blossom, even in snow,
But as I plant, one watches—and tears up
The faithful hapless root of my new rose!
I am a gardener, working through the day.
The Moor the neighbour cat who scratches up
My fresh-set cuttings:
Oh, I had rather feel my bare back beaten
With hurtling poisoned rods than have to watch
Dusk fall on Spain, and know the Moor squats there.
Watch the fair evening that should find her blessed
With vesper-bell and sweet thoughts of the old
Fall on her, darkened there with crouching mosques,
With frowning cryptic porch and goggling apse,
With cankerous, onion cupolas bulged to our sky,
Obscene against our crosses' starry writ.
The Moor with malign chisel carves and scoops
Perversely, darkly—all unnatural runes,
Nor fruit, nor leaf, nor child nor lamb, as we,
But a close abracadabra of laced lines,
Of plaited, criss-cross diaperings—lozenge, loop,
Diamond and triangle—some crooked curse
They spell for Spain, some curse I cannot read.
Their very marbles mumble 'Anti-christ.'
Oh! How I hate the Moor! I will to my Mother!"

He rose, and sat, and looked with furrowed brow,
And dark blue eyes like a sea-captain's, set
From under his black brows—on a dark sea,
For his lost ship—himself on some poor isle
That offering him its berries and its shells,
But grieves him the sorer for another strand.
The night air blew his black hair, like the mane
Of a lion, wounded, from his rutted brow.
"But no—men's tongues have turned even Mother from me;

The burr of my new shame sticks in her thoughts
And tangles all against me—me, her son!
She would not turn from me, had I but lost
My kingdom; meeting me these winter days,
Trudging the lanes of Spain for blackberries
To eat with bread given me by cottagers
(To me, in my own realm that exiles me!).
Mother had known me still her son, a king.
But I had lost my honour, that good cloak
That warms the beggar when his only coat
Is pierced to tatters, and his elbows out.
'Tis that I've wronged Florinda, Julian's child—
Flower of Cordova's court.

"One woman's loyalty had meant much to me:
Florinda is not loyal:
She creeps to womanish monks to get her shrift
Of that fault that was my glory—and I thought,
Her glory too.
She knew me not, through cowl and shrouded voice,
Poor silly child!—she dropped her little head
Like a tulip-bud snapped off, against my breast,
Against this brown monk's frock, and in these folds
Let fall her tears.
Like a poor linnet, tricked, she told the hawk,
That stripped her nest, just where that poor nest lay:
I, the brown-hooded hawk, brooded over her.

"What man that is a man would not have entered
That blossomed close she beckoned to, with faint hand?
Would not have entered those sealed, ice-bound ports,
To sail that unknown sea of morning blue?
What man having such a white-winged Pegasus
To bear him nightly, glorified, to the stars
Would not have mounted?
I did not feel so very sorry for her,
Creeping home, mouse-like, to a priest's round hole.
I know that I am sorry for myself—
A knight unhorsed, a king uncrowned, a son

Sullied, a lover shuffled off, excused.
She might be proud of me.

" Oh ! is there nowhere woman brave enough
For such a stormy petrel ?—brave to say,
' I have his love, it is enough for me ;
Nor bell, nor book, nor priest, nor robe, nor ring
Could bind me deeper, now I have his heart ? '
She might be wholly glad
That once a man, in the sweet of his youth came,
Impregnated her pale faith with seeds of fire.
Her dreams swayed as a field of mild drooped wheat
—I came as the stabbing golden fire-flies come
In level, swimming maze through the sad corn.
She hung, all folded limp, in the bud, unripe,
Men called her pure. I did not, for I call
Her purity neglect of sweet, full power.

" No woman for me now. I am alone."

Something pushed at his side, Theron, his dog,
A shadow through the shadows—but no shade
Save in the cool and fluent form of him,
With fox-like, silver fur, cooled by the night,
Never beat stouter warmer heart than here.
His master put a hand on him and drew
From his monk's poor scrip a broken horny crust
Given to him by a peasant at her door.
One of his people, when he had a people
(She knew not that it was her king who passed).
He broke it, and shared it quietly with his dog.
Dogs let their memories lie :
They do not, as men do, chew back the cud
Of a sweet hour, long past, sucking it home
Into the hollow present to make gall :
Theron had eaten at his master's knee
(From the king's board), there had been venison,
There had been roasted swans and broken meats,
—Now he ate one crust from out his master's hand

And found that good—lay down in the skirted cave
Of his master's knees and dreamt his master's dream.

'Twas of his horse Orelio, iron-grey.
He stood in might against the morning sun.
Dawn, like a rose behind his great grey head,
Reared, waiting in proud patience, for his king
To rise and saddle him—and fight the Moor.
He had no saddle and no bridle on.
This troubled Roderick with a dreamer's doubt.
As a full-bellied bass-viol waits the stroke
Of the player's bow, full of unfathomed sound,
So waited he his master's waking word
—With full low-rocking curve of breast and flank,
As a great warship, beached, with tilted prow
Above a winter sea of thundering surge
Orelio waited, reined back from the fight
In the thundering plains below where weapons clashed,
By his dreaming master's will—and might not plunge.
Glossy and grave he stood, as full of thought
As lies a lake in shadow, that could plunge
At the cutting of one slight dam, with a roar,
A headlong cataract, loud with hurled rocks.
So had Orelio thundered to the charge
At his master's slightest whisper, " To the Moor ! "
But ropes of sleep seemed binding Roderick down.
He thought : " Witiza, who stole him from me, clips him ill.
He has left too deep a coat upon his back.
The winter sweats will chill him—curse Witiza."
Of fair grey marble was Orelio ;
His mane a high-arched flame of salt-white foam,
His nervous legs fine as iron wrought by Thor,
His fetlock, foam-white, brushed his master's brow.

The stars rose over Spain : they rode like pricking knights ;
Singly, with bright sloped lance in rest,
On to the velvet lawn of Night's dark lists.
First Sirius, magnificent, with white helm ;

Then like a Moorish paladin Betelgeuse,
Then (Britomart among the tilting stars)
Capella, maiden-star, most beautiful;
Came the great lord Altair;
Mars, in red burnished arms, like carbuncle,
His breastplate bulged—his rubied casque jerked sparks.
Now all were come; the star-groups stood like ships,
Cross-trees, crow's-nests and stay-ropes, tressed with lights.
The good ships Perseus, Lyra, Cassiopeia,
And, like a trim brig, Pegasus' great square.
All good ships that have sailed a thousand storms.
The tide of night stood high full at the flood.
Still Roderick slept, his head among the rocks,
On a narrow sod—slept flat upon his breast,
His cheek upon his arm;
And dreamt on of his horse—and victory.
The stars hung now at their full height, in rest,
Superb—no longer reared in haughtiness
As princes bear up sceptres, themselves low,
But hung full down as God hangs down His lamps
Deep in the body of a waiting church,
From a leaping hammer-beam of wingéd vaults.
Not Canterbury, Notre Dame, nor Cologne,
Those deep-sunk wells of coolly shafted light
Sunk from God's terrace,
Leap lovelier in their astounding vaults
Than sprang the starry sky, that night in Spain.
Not even that fairy roof of Flemish oak
Floated ashore once in East Anglia
With all its wooden wings—
Bracket, and spandril, beam and corbel carved—
Rests lovelier than that sky of deep-hung lamps.
And as draped banners, war-webs, sagging hang
From staffs stuck in the vaults,
So sagged some looped-up webs of the star-nets
Draped there in victory—the Pleiades,
The rainy Hyades, the Leonids;
All, all, passed over Roderick's sunken head.
The frost set hard, it bit the broken earth,

Tightened that old warm metal to new iron.
It laced the clods with a crisp filigree,
Stiffened the cherry-wands to rods of glass,
Crusted the bramble-leaves at Theron's side.
And full, upon the middle of the night
One last November meteor slid from its slot
And left its place—
Drew a long gash, a silent crease of light
Level along the night—a seam of fire
Astounding in its utter noiselessness.
Theron stirred troubled:
And Roderick stirred and groaned:
"My horse! My horse!"

MARGARET MAITLAND RADFORD.

I DID NOT THINK

I DID not think to love so well
These little, cloudy ways,
The sobbing skies, the tolling bell,
That urges on the days.
Like tired sheep across the wold,
I see them stumbling past,
And wonder where may be the fold
Their feet shall find at last.

I did not think to hold so dear
These shadowed paths of sleep.
Ah! can it be your face draws near?
I wonder, do you keep
Sweet vigil for the unseeing sky?
If so, I'll rest content
Until the last lone day limps by,
Then go the way it went.

E. JOYCE HARRISON.

SYMBOLIC BEAUTY IN ROMANTIC POETRY

AT the end of the eighteenth century an intense aspiration to a new kind of beauty was felt by some poets and artists who loved the fugitive grace and glamour of dreams rather than the realities of the world. Spirit and matter, ideas and things were thus transfigured into symbolic apparitions. Coleridge, Novalis, Poe heard in their lyric trance wild haunting melodies, beheld visions of supreme loveliness and splendour, and when they woke from the glory of their dream they woke to dark pain and bleak desolation ; radiance and beauty had disappeared from the face of nature. They had drunk in emerald cups the wine of fairyland, and the subtle poison was still running in their veins ; therefore they shaped a new world to live in ; and, although their magic spheres are widely different, in all of them burns, inextinguishably, the same unearthly light. While Beethoven idealised the tragic struggles, the blind strivings of mankind, the infinite yearning of the soul into a harmony of serene perfect beauty, Shelley was building a world of rainbow and fire, where all the discords of reality became sweet melodies, and lifeless things were changed into Spirits of ethereal charm. While Schumann revealed a weird nostalgic sadness, Poe discovered the melancholy fascination of the shadowy valleys of Death and Despair. Like a blue wave crowned with glistening foam, the symbolic Dream advanced, stately and strong, swept the shore of Reality, and broke in tumultuous splendours, leaving imperishable jewels on the whispering sand.

* * *

With Blake a new era begins in poetry and art ; he opened two hidden doors, one leading to a mystic Arcadia, the secluded glen of Thel, the angel-trodden meadows of the *Songs of Innocence*, the other disclosing a realm of terror, the ominous unfathomable caverns of Vala and Urizen, crossed by the sinister fulgurations of falling stars bursting into flame.

Coleridge set forth a new æsthetic ideal—the beauty of mystery—and pointed out a fresh source of soul-entangling

effects: the suggestive power of verbal music. In *Christabel*, the conventional romantic scenery is transformed by the eerie melody of the lines into a symbolic landscape bewitching and enigmatic as the beauty of Geraldine. The poet's soul had been on the dark ocean of utter dejection and desolation; but the flower of vision had blossomed in his lonely heart and the opal rays darting from its chalice had revealed to the dreamer two emblems of his soul; the incense-wreathed palace of Kubla Khan and the Ancient Mariner's ship becalmed on the enchanted sea.

To the mind of Shelley the visible universe was but a pale symbol of the Infinite; in his ecstatic vision he beheld the springs of life and death, the everlasting source of vivifying waters and the fountains of devouring fire curling their sheets of flame against the brazen ramparts of Eternity; he saw the endless destruction and renovation; the conflagration, tossing her hair of dazzling light and murky billowing smoke, wild Maenad, was burning with the torch of Pain the mystic forest of Life; but then he heard the elated song of the summer wind and saw the blackened trees cover their boughs with purple blossoms, the soil—but now like molten lava—crystallise into a floor of amethysts.

Keats endowed his dreams with a symbolic significance; Endymion's eyes are dimmed with the shadows of an immortal nostalgic sadness; Hyperion, the dying Titan—Lamia, the gorgeous snake with beautiful melancholy eyes—the lady asleep in the rainbow light of the Gothic casement—Isabella, pining away in her dumb grief—the Spring night ringing with the death-song of the poet and the everlasting melody of the impassioned nightingales—are all of them allegories of the supreme loveliness shining in the poet's heart among the conscious shades of the approaching end.

* * *

In Edgar Allan Poe the background to his symbolic images of beauty is the darkness of nightmare, where the trembling hand of Space is powerless to set boundaries and Time folds his weary wings. His symbols are living beings;

the House of Usher, wrapt in a shroud of phosphorescent mist, suffers the anguish of a long agony.

Dante Gabriel Rossetti created two opposite ideals of beauty: the mystic charm of the Blessed Damozel and the demonic lure of Astarte; he laid the foundations of a new palace for the soul, the House Beautiful, which was decorated by Edward Burne Jones, G. F. Watts and Aubrey Beardsley with allegories of tender pathos and intensely tragic power. And in its stately rooms rang the exquisite and lurid tunes of Swinburne, and Tennyson painted with rare daintiness of touch his incomparable miniatures, frail as traces left by the breath on a mirror and yet full of passion and life, Elaine and Maud, and the Lady of Shalott, legendary princesses crowned with lilies and cypress, symbols of yearning love.

Meanwhile the Spirit of Romance had led William Morris to a peaceful serene country; clouds, long and slender as laurel leaves, are drifting in the sky, casting violet shadows on the cliffs of veined marble, on the waves writhing as wounded dragons on the beach. Here he composed his poems, emblems of his hopeful visionary mind. Swinburne preferred to this "glittering plain" the garden of Rossetti, where the radiance of a magic sun lingered under the mournful foliage as the far reverberations from a shield of topazes, where the House of Life loomed in the hazy distance and the song of Rose Mary mingled with Helen's sombre incantation. But strange were the fruits that the poet of Atalanta gathered, fruits of unholy dreaming, of hatred and desperate gloom; lying among the fragrant, poisonous harvest, he was visited by morbid hallucinations; symbolic figures rose before him: Life in a sumptuous raiment, woven of longing and sorrow—Love, with the fiery wings of Desire embroidered on the black brocade of Pain—Passion, the masked appearance of Sin—and Death, the brother of Sleep.

About the same time, Flaubert had gone to the immemorial temples of Egypt, where the Sphinx and the Chimæra dwell, symbolic winged monsters with emerald eyes and bloodthirsty lips; and this dazzling land was the

emblem of his weary desperate soul ; white with insufferable light was the afternoon sky, and among the broken shafts of columns were still standing the gigantic statues of long-forgotten kings, their faces worn to a death-like grin, laurel groves blossoming on their colossal shoulders. Here he saw the pageantry of idols, their satanic shapes flashing with precious stones ; here he dreamed the elusive figure of Salammbô, clad in barbaric magnificence, reflected on the lapis lazuli floor of her palace. And he depicted these allegories of his soul with a prose as musical as rhyme, a prose in which the musical power of words is tasked to the utmost.

* * *

Stéphane Mallarmé, with Gérard de Nerval and Arthur Rimbaud, boldly started an æsthetic theory, by which the suggestive faculties of the word were combined with the symbolic significance of the images ; Mallarmé showed a perfect mastery of the language, but he was the slave of music, so that his highly polished metaphors are suddenly distorted in a disconcerting way, according to the drift and cadence of the melody, and it is difficult to follow the outline of the leading idea through the arabesques of the changing symbols. The same principles were adopted by Verlaine, the dreamer who learnt to sing listening to fountains sobbing in the misty glimmer of the moon, who derived his inspiration from the mysterious sadness of autumn twilights, and afterwards, in lines as tuneful and tender as vesper bells, related his deliverance from the swamp of sin.

A poet in prose, Joris Karl Huysmans, after having portrayed with the minuteness and perspicuity of a Flemish painter the life of the middle and low classes in Paris, built for his soul a bizarre palace, where he intoxicated his mind with the most refined dreams of art and poetry, with symphonies of colours and perfumes, with the perverse scintillation of rare gems, and developed into new and quaint harmonies the echoes of Mallarmé and Baudelaire. But when he awoke from his artificial allegories he found that the calm healthy beauty of nature had no answer to his

subtle pain, and when he looked again at life, stern was the face of the future and yet crowned with the splendours of Eternity; he then evoked a complex symbol of his mind in *The Cathedral*, where his thoughts are glowing like the roses of the stained glass windows of the Gothic church, unfolding their translucent leaves among the blue incense clouds.

In the gradual changes of his æsthetic ideal, Maurice Maeterlinck disclosed to us two aspects of his inward vision: a savage beauty, inspired by the study of Shakespeare and the Elizabethan playwrights, and a metaphysical symbolic loveliness derived from the French contemporary school and from the Neo-Platonists. He first composed in the dream-laden feverish atmosphere of the emblematic hot-house—his secluded lonely soul—some songs of deep mystical pathos; then he went out into the wild tragic night, the night in which Macbeth saw the sword of fire and the Duchess of Malfi was killed; in the black garden peacocks were perched on cypresses, in the churchyard lambs were lying on the graves; Beauty was entwined with Terror; in her little room the Princess Maleine stared trembling at the stormy darkness. Then the poet turned to a clearer, though not less passionate, conception of life; Ygraine shattered her lamp against the door of Death, the flame of Reason expired in the gloom of Mystery; Alladine descended to the cave where blossom the unreal roses of an unearthly love; Mélisande sang her strange ballad in the forest of Passion, under the stars of Destiny. The investigations of the thinker, the vain efforts of the mind to break the seal of Mystery, the stubborn and ever-baffled endeavours to decipher the meaning of sorrow and pain in the intricate pattern woven by the subtle, swift and sure hands of God, were expressed with symbolic figures of a primitive rigidity, of pure and stern outlines. His conception of a spiritual beauty—La Beauté Intérieure—in his dramas and in his musical prose receives a new charm from the skilful reticence of the dialogue and the clear intensity of his style. But while Maeterlinck, led astray by his intellectual pride, was losing his grasp both of his

thought and his art, another poet was shaping new exquisite allegories for a novel vision of beauty.

To William Butler Yeats the wind sighing on the Irish hills was the voice of an ancient sorrow, the leaves falling through the ghostly white mist were golden fairies dancing to a weird tune; the immemorial dreams of the Celt surrounded him, as the birds of Angus, with a whirling circle of flashing wings; reality was blotted out; the Earth was but an ephemeral drop in the silver shower of stars which is the universe. In his lyrics, in his dramas, most images are symbols and allegories; the beauty of life yields to the beauty of mystic heroic love and sacrifice in *The Countess Cathleen*, to the beauty of death in *The Shadowy Waters*, to the beauty of mystery in *The Land of Heart's Desire.*

The fervid life of the "Villes Tentaculaires," the conflicting forces at work in the universe opened a new vision of cosmic beauty to Emile Verhaeren; to him the Creation was an incandescent sphere shaped by mysterious Powers into continually modified, but always beautiful, forms; his symbols, which he sings with a rhythm moulded on the throbbing of universal life, are quivering with the pulsing ardour of their intense inner life.

But it is especially among the mystic singers that we find symbolic representations of the soul. Sick with the bitterness of pleasure, Baudelaire wandered on the shore of the sea of Eternity, while the crimson glow of the sunset of Hope still lingered over the horizon; and Nature and Life were to him symbols of his troubled mind, of his weary heart.

Arnold, too, was led by Sorrow to the temple of Faith; but he also stopped on the threshold; as Hawthorne's marble faun, the face of his soul was sculpted by the hand of Pain, and behind the hard features of the pagan god a mystic dawn was kindling and transfiguring them; yet he died in doubt and vain hope, and he embodied his sad dreams in his allegories of the Gipsy Scholar and the emblematic Tree.

Thomas Lovell Beddoes and James Thomson, the author of *The City of Dreadful Night*, two kindred spirits, worked

in the same sphere of thought, and their poetical crown was set with the dusky rubies of Fatality and Despair, and all their symbols are images of Death. The early—and best—poems of Swinburne are a tissue of allegories in the same dark cast of thought.

Among the subtlest painters of symbolic figures are conspicuous Coventry Patmore and Francis Thompson. Patmore, whose spiritual world is suffused with the soft brilliancy of ethereal peace, expressed with complex allegories his mystic love, and wove his emblems into a suggestive original language; the following lines are a fair instance of his lyric power:

> There lies the crown
> Which all thy longing cures.
> Refuse it, Mortal, that it may be yours!
> It is a Spirit, though it seems red gold;
> And such may no man, but by shunning, hold.
> Refuse it, till refusing be despair;
> And thou shalt feel the phantom in thy hair.

Thompson, intensely conscious of the inmost beauty which lies deep in the soul beneath the idle ripples of external sensations, devised new symbols of imperishable loveliness to depict the apparitions of his lyric trance. *The Mistress of Vision* and *The Hound of Heaven* are the best examples of his exquisite style.

The faculty of considering reality as a symbol is peculiarly characteristic of the Romantic mind; and there is a remarkable difference in the treatment of the symbolic image between the Romantic poets and their predecessors. In Medieval and Renaissance poetry the allegorical figures are signs of abstractions—Virtue, Sin, Glory—and are made up of various elements combined with skilful artifice; such are Dante's and Spenser's allegories, Stephen Hawes's and Herbert's emblematic figures. To the Romantic poets nature and life are visible representations of their emotions, a mirror of their spiritual states; a landscape or a face or a tragic event, seen through their inward vision, becomes in their lyrics and dramas a symbol of their deepest feelings and most refined moods.

FEDERICO OLIVERO.

THE PASSING OF YOUTH

A MASQUE.

Old Man	Age
Old Woman	Death
Girl	Love
Youth	Fame

Children, Young Men and Maidens.
The Years (*etc.*).

The Scene *is divided into two. On the right is seen the interior of a cottage kitchen. On the left, the out-of-doors; the wall of the cottage forming the division.*

Without. *A path runs by the side of the cottage porch and window. A few steps beyond, it joins a cross-road, which comes from the left and winds away among low hills. Grass and wild flowers grow by the path; roses climb about the porch and window. Birds sing.*

Within. *A comfortable, old-fashioned kitchen. On the left is the dividing wall, with door, and beside it a long low window with wide chintz covered seat, giving on to the path. At the back an old dresser, set with blue china. On the right an open fire-place, with an inner door beside it. Oak table in centre.*

The Old Man *and* Old Woman *sit in armchairs on either side the fire-place. The* Old Woman (*facing*) *is knitting. The* Old Man *reading in a large volume and dozing. The* Girl *sits on a stool between them, with a book in her hand.*

The cottage is shady; but without is full sunlight, and some falls through the window.

Old Man: How bright the sun is. It dazzles in my glasses.

Old Woman: It will fade the chintz. Draw the curtain, child.

[*The* Girl *goes to the window to draw the curtain. A country wedding procession winds up the cross-road and away into the hills. She leans out to watch it. Some of the* Girls *wave and beckon to her.*

OLD MAN: What are you doing at the window? The light worries me.

GIRL: Granny, Granny! There is a wedding going by! May I go out and follow?

OLD MAN: What, go after a lot of strangers? What are you thinking of? You young people think of nothing but foolish pleasures. Why do you not read your book?

OLD WOMAN: Ah! the weddings now-a-days are not so fine as when I was a girl. I remember when I was a bridesmaid I wore a gown of pink silk with silver beads.

GIRL: Oh, Granny, how lovely! Granny, may I ever be a bridesmaid and wear a pink silk gown and silver beads?

OLD WOMAN: Some day, some day, my dear. All in good time. You are young yet.

[YOUTH *comes up the path, playing on a silver flute. He is dressed in rose colour and crowned with roses. The* GIRL *leans out of window to hear him as he passes the door.*

GIRL: How sweetly you play. Who are you who play so sweetly?

YOUTH: Do you not know me? I am Youth. Come out into the sunlight with me. I will show you beautiful things. (*He plays.*)

GIRL (*Turning to the room*): Here is one who plays so sweetly. May I go out and listen?

OLD MAN: I hear nothing but the birds that make a great noise. If the window were shut it would disturb me less.

[YOUTH *plays.*

OLD WOMAN: I thought I heard something. It reminded me of a tune I heard long ago. (*She tries to hum it.*) I forget. (*She falls into a reverie.*)

YOUTH (*Stroking the* GIRL'S *plaits as she leans from the window*): How beautiful your hair is. It is the colour of the ripe nuts in the woods. And your eyes—they are brown as the bright hill stream dancing down the valley. Come with me and join my company. I will teach you the dance that the winds dance in April, and the songs that the

brooks sing. You shall lie in the warm primroses, and play with the swift cloud-shadows on the hills. Will you not come with me ?

GIRL : Granny, may I go out and play in the sun ?

OLD WOMAN : By-and-bye, my dear, by-and-bye. Your grandfather may need you. You shall go out and play when we are asleep.

OLD MAN : To play in the sun ? What foolishness you talk. You young poeple are never contented. Have you not a comfortable room here ? Sit down and read your book.

YOUTH : I am passing by, I am passing by. Will you not follow ?

[YOUTH *goes up the path, playing his flute. A troop of* YOUNG MEN *and* MAIDENS, *with garlands of roses, come up the cross-road and follow, dancing, after him.*

The GIRL *sits down by the fire, with a sigh, and takes up her book. Presently she lays it down and looks into the fire.*

OLD WOMAN : What do you read in your book ?

GIRL : I read of a Knight in silver armour, who wooed a Princess.

OLD MAN : What foolishness. No one wears silver armour in these days.

[YOUTH *comes to the door with a* STRANGER, *who stands aside. His head is turned away. He wears a blue mantle, but the gleam of silver armour is seen beneath it.* YOUTH *plays upon his pipe. The* GIRL *runs to the window and leans out.*

YOUTH : Come out, and go with us over the hills.

GIRL (*Very low*) : Who is that with you ?

YOUTH : His name is Love. Come with us and we will show you beautiful things. We will show you what was hidden in the sunset, and what the first stars say at evening, and the secret that is folded in the roses. Come.

[*The* GIRL *looks back into the room ; then shakes her head.* YOUTH *and* STRANGER *turn away up the path. The* GIRL *lingers at the window and gathers*

some red roses. She comes back into the room and arranges the flowers in a bowl upon the table.

GIRL: Granny, there was one without in silver armour, and his name was Love.

OLD WOMAN (*Nodding*): I met one called Love, long ago.

GIRL: And was he in silver armour?

OLD WOMAN: Ay, he was all in silver armour.

GIRL: What! Grandfather in silver armour?

OLD WOMAN: Hush, hush; it was not your grandfather. (*She smiles to herself as she knits.*)

[*The* GIRL *seats herself on the window seat with her book. The light is growing mellower, as of late afternoon.* YOUTH *comes along the cross-road, playing, followed by* CHILDREN *dancing. He comes to the door, leading a little* CHILD *by the hand, and with a baby on his arm, hidden by the folds of his cloak. The other* CHILDREN *play around behind, pelting each other with cowslip bells and stringing daisy chains. The* GIRL *leans out of the window, longingly.*

YOUTH: Will you not come out with me? The day is going by and there are little children who wait for you. They would tell you of your own childhood when you forget. They would show you where the first celandines grow, and where the blackbird builds her nest. They would lie on your heart and keep it warm, that it may never grow old.

GIRL: Ah, I should love a little child to play with! Granny, may I go out to find the little children who wait for me?

OLD WOMAN: Little children? I remember your mother when she was a little child.

GIRL: What was she like, Granny?

OLD WOMAN: As warm and soft as a sleepy kitten, and as sweet as cowslips in the sun. She lay in my arm, so. (*She rocks to and fro, crooning as to a baby.*)

GIRL: Granny, I should so like a little child to be in my arms.

OLD WOMAN: Some day, my dear, some day. There is plenty of time. Wait awhile.

YOUTH *goes off up the road, the* CHILDREN *dancing after him. The* CHILD *he leads by the hand looks back reproachfully. The* GIRL *leans from the window, stretching her hands towards them.*

OLD MAN: Children? A pack of trouble. It is better to read here in peace.

OLD WOMAN: Your grandfather is tired. You had better get the tea ready.

[*The* GIRL *comes from the window, sets the kettle on the fire, and takes the crockery from the dresser.* YOUTH *comes along the cross-road, playing a stirring tune. He marches before "*FAME*"—a stately Queen in silver and purple robes. A train of gorgeously dressed slaves follow her, bearing on their heads baskets of rich gifts. Behind press an eager crowd of* MEN *and* WOMEN. YOUTH *turns aside and comes to the cottage door. The* GIRL *stands at the window with a plate in her hand.*

YOUTH: It is FAME that goes by. To-night she holds a banquet in the town, and will give fair gifts to her guests. Will you not follow her?

GIRL (*Turning to the room*): There is Fame going by. May I not follow her to her banquet?

OLD MAN: Fame? Ah, I remember, I once sat at her banquet. It was the year I came home from the war. There were many people in the street, and they cheered us as we went by. I remember. I remember. How they cheered!

GIRL: May I not follow her, Grandfather?

OLD MAN: You? How can a girl go to her banquet? We were soldiers I say. Women were meant to look after the children at home.

GIRL (*Sadly*): There are no children here. I might try to follow for part of the way even if I never reached the town.

OLD MAN: You talk foolishness. Get the tea.

[FAME *passes on from sight, with* YOUTH *beside her, and the crowd following.*

The GIRL *lays the table. The sun is setting. Inside*

the cottage it grows dusky ; outside the light is pink and soft.

YOUTH *comes to the door, and plays very sweetly and yearningly upon his pipe. Along the cross-road comes a procession of figures,* "THE YEARS," *and winds away among the hills. The leaders are in gay pale colours ; the robes of the later figures deepen in colour and they walk more soberly.*

The GIRL *tries not to listen to* YOUTH'S *pipe for a time. She carries cups of tea and food to the old people. Then gradually as the music grows more appealing she goes to the window.*

GIRL : You play sadly now. Who are those that pass by ?

YOUTH : Those are THE YEARS that pass by; and I must go with them. Will you not come out before the sun sets ?

GIRL : Will you not stay here and play for me ?

YOUTH : No, I must follow THE YEARS. (*He goes off, playing appealingly and looking back.*)

[*The* GIRL *helps the old people to more tea ; then puts the things aside. She moves slowly now, and her head droops. It is growing dark in the room.*

OLD MAN : It grows very cold. Go and fetch more wood for the fire.

[*The* GIRL *wraps a shawl about her head and goes out by the inner door near the fireplace.*

[DEATH, *a gracious figure in grey draperies that hide the face, and long grey wings, comes up the road to the cottage. She carries a bunch of keys to open all doors.* DEATH *enters the cottage, lays a hand upon the* OLD MAN'S *head as if in blessing ; leans over the* OLD WOMAN *and kisses her brow. They sigh softly.* DEATH *steals out.*

[*The* GIRL *comes back through the inner door, with the shawl over her head and a bundle of wood in her arms. She begins to mend the fire. The room is very dark.*

GIRL: How soundly they sleep! They will not need me now.

[YOUTH *comes by the cottage, playing a gay tune, followed by a troop of* YOUNG PEOPLE *and dancing* CHILDREN.

[*The* GIRL *runs to the door, opens it, and steps into the path.*

GIRL: YOUTH, dear YOUTH, I am come out to play with you. They are asleep. I may follow you now.

YOUTH: Who are you? I do not know you.

GIRL: Did you not call me to be one of your company?

YOUTH (*Laughing*): To be one of my company! Nay, how could that be? My company are young and gay; and you are old and sad.

[YOUTH *plucks* GIRL'S *shawl aside. In the outdoor light she is seen to be no longer young. The brightness is faded from her hair, the colour from her face. She is no longer a girl but a woman. They laugh merrily at her.*

ONE: See, her hair is streaked with grey!

ANOTHER: And see the lines about her eyes! Like frost-work on a window pane!

ANOTHER: She moves so slowly, she could never dance!

[*They laugh. She shrinks back, and turns towards* YOUTH.

WOMAN: Do you not remember. You would come to this cottage door and play to me?

YOUTH: I remember a girl with brown hair that stood at the window here. But that was before THE YEARS passed by. She must be gone with THE YEARS.

WOMAN: There was one who came with you. His name was LOVE. Perhaps he would remember?

YOUTH: LOVE has passed by long ago. He will not return.

WOMAN: And there was another—FAME. She came to the door.

YOUTH: Nay, FAME comes to no one's door. Those who desire her must come out and follow her.

WOMAN: Could I follow her now?

YOUTH: No, no, it is too late. Those who would follow FAME must start betimes. It is a long road to her city.

You could not reach it before sun-down, and already her feast is set. Do you not hear the bells ?

[*The pealing of far-off bells comes over the hills.*

WOMAN : Ah, there are the CHILDREN. I would dearly love to play with the CHILDREN now. Will they not come to me ?

[*She kneels, holding out her hands to the* CHILDREN. *They cover their faces shyly and edge away.*

1ST CHILD : When we find our mother she will have bright hair.

2ND CHILD : Your voice is tired ; you could not laugh with us.

[*They run away, laughing. All laugh and begin to move away after* YOUTH.

WOMAN : YOUTH ! dear YOUTH ! will you not come back to me ?

YOUTH : I shall never come again.

WOMAN : There was an old priest once, who told me of a country beyond the rim of the world, where we should find all things we had longed for. Shall I meet you again there ?

YOUTH : That I cannot tell.

WOMAN : Will you leave nothing behind you that I may keep ?

YOUTH : I can leave nothing behind me. But you shall hear the music of my flute after I have long passed by.

[*He goes away up the road, playing ; the others dancing after him. The* WOMAN *stands looking after them. The sound of the flute is blown back to her when all have disappeared. The light fades. The first stars start out in the sky.* AGE *comes in. She is like any plain old country woman. Her hair is grey, her face wrinkled and toothless ; but there is nothing strange or terrifying in her appearance ; it is quite common-place. She wears a high steeple hat with a close white cap under it, a brown sprigged bede gown with a cross-over tippet, and horn-rimmed spectacles.*

AGE : Good-evening, my dear.

WOMAN: Who are you?

AGE: I am AGE, and I have come to stay with you for a time.

WOMAN: I do not think I wish for you as a visitor.

AGE: Tut, tut! How foolish folk are! They never give me a welcome. And yet they must know that I shall come to visit them some day. Let us go indoors. I am afraid of the evening air.

[*They go into the cottage.*

AGE: You have a nice little home here. We shall be very cosy together. Had you not better light the lamp?

WOMAN (*Looking at the old people, dimly seen in their chairs*): Will it not waken them?

AGE: No, they will not wake.

[*She draws the curtain across the window and seats herself on the seat.*

(*Cheerfully*) You have nothing to watch for now!

WOMAN: No, I have nothing to watch for now.

[*She lights the lamp, and sets it on the table. It throws a small circle of light, leaving the old people in deep shadow.*

[AGE *takes some pale coloured wools from her pocket and begins to knit.*

WOMAN: What do you do there?

AGE: I am knitting a shroud. I knit shrouds for those I come to visit.

WOMAN (*Touching it*): What curious wool!

AGE: It is woven of faded dreams. There is plenty to be had for the asking, for it is of no worth. The colours are gone, as you see. Once, may be, they were bright enough.

WOMAN: But what shall I do? My grandparents do not need me now they are asleep; and I cannot stand by and watch you knit.

AGE: You had best take your book and read.

[*The* WOMAN *picks up her book, and sits on her old seat before the fire, reading in the circle of lamp light.*

CURTAIN.

EVA DOBELL.

THE INDUSTRIOUS ANT AND THE GAY GRASSHOPPER*

MR. OLWEN WARD CAMPBELL'S *Shelley and the Unromantics*, is a large and serious work; someone called it a shamelessly horrible book, but excepting in its dissecting-room manner, which includes calling all former operators fools and knaves, there is not much that is horrible. Of course, an author must expect to rouse furious opposition when he starts off with dicta such as the following—"Children at school often awaken to a sense of poetry through learning *The Cloud* by heart; and would perhaps remain awake if the vast indiscriminate ensuing doses of Tennyson did not befuddle them entirely." Again, "He (Shelley) has also suffered . . . from such insults as the false and noxious praise of Francis Davis Thompson." Verdicts of this sweeping nature are either intended to rouse opposition or are employed, as the bell of the muffin man, to attract attention. We rather suspect they are bell-shaking. Mr. Campbell uproariously tilts at all the poets and men of letters: Kingsley "never hesitated to hit below the belt"; Professor Dowden has done his "idol" no good by his *Life of Shelley;* Hogg and Peacock began "the pernicious myth of the 'eternal child'"; "passion and metaphysics masqueraded in the poems of Tennyson, Rossetti and Browning"; and this is not a sufficiently "knock out" blow for Browning, elsewhere he speaks of "the hotch-potch of Browning"; Francis Thompson again "wandering in the gloomy and inhuman wastes of his metaphysical catholicism . . . loved Shelley . . . guiltily, fretfully, perversely." Byron has the selfishness that "bred in him self-consciousness, laziness, envy, insincerity." Medwin is an "oxymoron," by which term we suppose Mr. Campbell means that he was "sharp" and "stupid" and not that the poor fellow was a mere figure of speech. Trelawney he describes horrifically as a wild abandoned savage, a description rather difficult to

* *Shelley and the Unromantics*. Olwen Ward Campbell (Methuen & Co.). *Ariel*. A Shelley Romance. André Maurois. Translated by Ella D'Arcy (The Bodley Head).

reconcile with Millais' picture of a benignant old gentleman with a modest young woman reading to him.

But when all is said or written, when all the sordid domestic upheavals and stormy complications of those ill-regulated households of Godwin, Byron and Shelley are minutely dwelt on, is it worth while? Of Shelley it can well be said (to invert Francis Thompson's line) "Better thou weavest they woof of song than thou didst weave thy woof of life." The beauty of Shelley's song is ever with us; we do not need to peer and gloat and dissect the sorry events in the life of that high-souled, supremely unselfish spirit; the events coloured the song, and that is all we have to deal with. If Mr. Campbell had confined himself to the judgments on the genius of the poet, with which he concludes his book, it would have been far more welcome. Who does not know that Shelley had a beautiful nature that was warped and thwarted by narrow-minded relatives and tutors, by unworthy friends and unsuitable marriages? If, indeed, any marriage could have suited his untrammelled originality,—a genius should realise that the patient endurance and quiet happiness of domesticity are not for him or her.

Of the Romantic poets Mr. Campbell asserts that "Christ was the first Romantic and the greatest," and yet he quotes Professor Herford that "passion glorified and dwelt on" by the Romantic spirit is contrasted with "passion restrained and somewhat disparaged" by the classical. Now at no time did Christ glorify passion and dwell upon it. Blake, he says, was the first father of the Romantic Renaissance, and "ten years later Wordsworth and Coleridge produced their *Lyrical Ballads* and the Romantic age had begun." In spite of this pronouncement he adds that Coleridge "after the production of a few divinely intoxicating poems, miraculously distilled out of his lymphatic soul," merely talked his age "into a delirium"; and that Wordsworth soon ceased to be either a poet or a teacher, "contenting himself by writing 'potions' no more stimulating than the 'tea-pot pieties of Cowper.'" Having thus disposed of the first poets of the Romantic

spirit, he drags the reader floundering and quite unenlightened on to the dictum that when Shelley died, having failed, "like Keats and Wordsworth" to make his message understood, the traditions of the Romantics were founded upon its *un*-Romantics. The reader is left mentally deafened, "the gentleman is evidently saying a great deal in a very loud voice and with a good deal of acrimony, but either his resonant declamation or his passionate pointings leaves us confused."

A translation of *Ariel* by M. André Maurois has also been published, the sub-title being *A Shelley Romance*, but in the actual meaning of the word, romance, there is nothing, except in the delightfully French invention of Lord Byron's speech to his just wedded wife: "when he got into the carriage after the ceremony, he said to Lady Byron: 'You are my wife, and that is enough for me to hate you. Were you some one else's wife I might perhaps care about you.'" This is unconsciously but supremely comic. Even if Byron had been the monster that M. Maurois and Mr. Campbell depict him as being, his vanity would have made such a speech an impossibility, in addition to which he was an English gentleman and not a melodramatic French villain! Claire Claremont's letters to Byron are, we trust, invented by M. Maurois; the love-sick girl of that period has, happily, died out; but it is difficult to believe that any girl, however supremely a fool, could write, "I shall ever remember the gentleness of your manners and the wild originality of your countenance." M. Maurois scarcely mentions Shelley's poetry, yet if it were not for his poems should we take any interest in his turbulent domestic affairs? It may be that the translation is responsible for the appallingly slangy sentence—"Mary had good nerves. Poor drowned Harriet was never a patch on her." If, as Mr. Campbell affirms, Professor Dowden did his "idol" no good by his *Life of Shelley*, neither does the Romance of *Ariel* nor the book of *Shelley and The Unromantics* greatly add to the lustre of the man. But we learn from the *poet*, his message is clear enough to those who know his poems, and the beauty of his singing is evident to all but the mentally deaf.

ARTHUR HOOD.

THE DYNAMICS OF AMERICAN POETRY—IV

WITTER BYNNER—HENRY LANE ENO—MARGUERITE WILKINSON—GLENN WARD DRESBACH—MINNIE FERRIS HAUENSTEIN—ELIZABETH J. COATSWORTH —JOHN COWPER POWYS—FREDERICK MORTIMER CLAPP.

WITTER BYNNER is one of the most prolific American poets and so productive is his pen that the reviewer is apt to be overtaken by new books while the reviews of earlier works are awaiting publication. I have had such an experience twice. The first time I had been reviewing some of Mr. Bynner's works—*A Canticle of Praise*, *Greenstone Poems*, *The Beloved Stranger*, *The New World*, *A Canticle of Pan and Other Poems*, *Young Harvard and Other Poems*—and other works, and having to condense to fit limited space, was about to attempt to make a valuation of his genius and art when *A Book of Love* (E. P. Dutton) arrived, followed shortly by *The New World* and *A Book of Plays* (Alfred A. Knopf).

It is difficult to resist reading the prose works of a poet. In Mr. Bynner's case, all his works are poetic and filled with what Edgar Lee Masters characterizes as "moving grace" and "beauty magically turned," and we find ourselves reading his *Book of Plays* with as much eagerness as we read his books of poems.

Mr. Bynner's translations are in a class by themselves. *A Book of Love* being a translation from the French of Charles Vildrac's *Livre d'Amour*, the reviewer may do little more than to judge the translator's art. To do more would be taking much for granted. To ascertain his personal preferences I wrote Mr. Bynner. His answer follows:

> If you mean "A Book of Love," I can tell you now that I like best: *The Farewell*, *Glory*, *An Inn*, *The Conquerors*, *A Visit* and *To Be a Man*. *The Farewell*, you notice, comes first.

A lover of Walt Whitman, Mr. Bynner selected Vildrac's work because, as he tells us in the introductory translator's

note, they are "notably near in their breadth of kinship to the genius of Walt Whitman."

The translator's note is instructive of this poet's enterprise and point of view and is helpful in judging his works and the selections listed in his letter. He says:

After I had translated and printed, in one or another of the American magazines, every poem from the original French volume, I found myself questioning the form I had followed in English. Mr. Vildrac's verse might be called mastered verse, rather than free verse. He employs a metrical form; he frequently employs rhyme and still more frequently assonance.

It took many months to change some of the translations, from the English free verse in which I had already printed them serially, to a measure nearer that of the original; and later it took many weeks more to reinstate among them certain of the free cadences which have seemed after all, a better English expression of the substance. I began this labour, partly because I am gradually being persuaded that many of the English experiments called free verse are indications not so much of a purely poetic impulse to restore beauty and cadence to English prose and are, therefore, less likely to hold the essential magic of poetry than are the seasoned and proven rhythms and metres. The psalm-creating genius of Walt Whitman has thus far isolated him in a magnificent solitude.

Being limited in space I must resist the temptation of quoting lengthily from *The Farewell*, which is a realistic description of the man who went down in a sinking ship:

The mad water enwound him
Trying to dissolve him
And for an eternity
The vast liquid tumult
Was at his very core.

Then for an instant about him
The threshing quieted,
The sea took respite
And there was seething of broken foam:
And his senses found the air again like another world

So it was until dawn.
And to live longer, he ceased swimming,
Rather with his arms and legs
Making the water uphold him.

So it was until dawn,
And then the cold sheathed him;
And only then fell
The blind hope from his body,
That proud thing which gives to men
The custom of their victories
And the subjection of the earth;
Only then closed in on him
The awful certainty.

There was at the heart of this man
A life unknown to himself,
A life simple and still full
Of child-like faith.

Which never would have believed
That for its most favoured guest,
Its most loving son,
Nature can be at times
An iron stranger, deaf
And absolute and pitiless.

There follow several pages of absorbing description of the process of thinking and visioning of this man for whom there was no hope of being saved from the grave in the deeps, until

He had to sing:
It was the loveliest song
Of the pangs of love and sadness,
It was the most poignant song of man
That a man had ever sung.

* * *

His teeth were chattering while he sang it
And water burned his eyes,
But it was not the water of the sea.

Glory tells the story of a man who attempted to analyze the glory of popularity and found it desultory:

He had known how to win around him
Many men,
With a voice they all loved to hear
And high deeds of which they told one another.

But in investigating the crowd he realized that being glorified by them was not as unique as it had seemed at first :

> And he even saw a crowd,
> A crowd like his own,
> Captivated, frenzied,
> Pressing about some one else
> Who was good at making faces.

As we follow him through further investigations we realize how Clemenceau, Wilson and Lloyd George must have felt when the same crowd that acclaimed them voted them out of office !

Reflecting we admit the premises

> * * * that to join the crowd's soul
> Each man lends for an instant
> But the surface of his own soul.
> * * *

Turning to *The New World*, one feels that Bynner is at his best when expressing himself, no matter how admirable his interpretations of the realistic Vildrac. Richard Le Gallienne said of *The New World :* " It brims with beauty like a spring filled with stars. And O, from what depths it wells up ! . . . The dew of the infinite is on this poem." Edwin Arlington Robinson says, " I don't know when I have read a book that has seemed to me to be more thoroughly alive," and Jessie B. Rittenhouse found that : " The mountain-air of the spirit blows through it all."

It is a high-minded epic to the New World and to Romance, dedicated to Celia Keays, whose memory moves the poet to say in the opening dedication :

> * * * has anyone alive
> Ever come and said
> Anything as intimate
> As you are saying dead ?

A twentieth century Dante, recalling the high-lights of an undying friendship for his Beatrice—Celia—and viewing

our world with her and through her, with unusual charm and romance :

"Where are you bound, O solemn voyager ?"
She laughed one day and asked me in her mirth :
"Where are you from ?
Why are you come ?"

* * *

"As a bird comes by the grace of spring
You are my journey and my wing—
And into your heart, O Celia,
My Heart has flown to sing
Solemn and long
A most undaunted song."

This was the song that she herself had taught me how to sing :
* * * As immigrants come toward America
On their continual ships out of the past,
So on my ship America have I, by birth,
Come forth at last
From all the bitter corners of the earth.

* * *

"The unseen shall become the seen * * *
O Celia, be the Queen—
The Genoan am I!"
And Celia cried :
"My jewels, they are yours,
Yours for the journey. Use them well.
Go find the new world, win the shores
Of which the old books tell!"

Mr. Bynner visualizes in Celia womanhood and what it represented through the ages in all lands :

There is a vision, Celia, in your face . . .
Beauty had lived in India like a mad
And withdrawn prophetess, in Greece had set her pace
Between a laurelled lad
And singing maiden, pitched her purple tents
In Rome, learned with a mother's fears in Bethlehem to nurse
A son of God upon her breast.

* * *

The conclusion :

O Celia, my direction
And my destiny,
Toward a new world I see
New immigrants arriving from new ships
And I hear your laughter upon all their lips.

* * * * *

Henry Lane Eno's *Maid of Gloucester* (Duffield and Co.) reminds us that the works of this poet-philosopher-playwright, *The Wanderer*, *Indian Summer*, *Activism* and *The Baglioni* have been widely received and favourably read. Lines in his last books reveal him as one prone to "sit alone above the world," and from some rocky throne "see all the ocean's tide." His answer to my request to name his favourite poem came from London, and is characteristic :

The poem which I like the best is *The Hidden World*. There's more in it than meets the eye at first glance—epitomising, as it does, the whole evolutionary trend of things from Geology and Astronomy up to "the One without a name."

The Hidden World covers twenty-four stanzas. The first two describe his meeting the master, then follow the master's meditations :

THE HIDDEN WORLD.

I met a stranger on the mountain crest,
Whose eyes were like twin stars of fire
Charged with the memories of countless years,
Yet free as midnight skies from all the tears
Born of this world's desire.

Calm as some Buddha on his pedestal
Of antique gold and ivory
He sat, and from his feet the forest fell
In waves of green down to the far-off swell
And thunder of the sea.

* * *

And as, by gentle magin power compelled,
I faltered to the master's side,

He smiled and said, "like gods we sit alone
See all the ocean's tide

"Broad meadows sleeping in the mellow sun,
Deep-shaded forest, lake, and rushing stream;
And far beyond the haunts of busy man,
The hills that stretch their everlasting span
To heaven's distant gleam.

* * *

"Yet, though our science sees the radiant stars
In stern obedience to its laws
Swing through their courses, while to it alone
Earth gives up all her secrets one by one
And her dark veil withdraws.

* * *

"But dreaming poets of the ancient times,
Fair children of some clearer light,
Saw visions of this deeper life's array;
And even many a child of this late day
Is born with truer sight.

"For there's a wisdom in the poet's dream,
A sense in childhood's reveries,
That flashes straight to Nature's secret heart
Which we now try in vain to tear apart
And bare of mysteries.

* * *

"But mightier than all these heavenly throngs
Who drive their chariots of flame,
Greater than any God of Space or Time,
Lies hid in your own heart—secret, sublime—
The One without a name!"

* * *

Then, leaving my strange master still enwrapped
In dreams beyond all earthly ken,
Through moonlit forests wandering alone
I sought the faint familiar lights that shone
From far-off homes of men.

The book includes twenty-one Petrarchan sonnets, including a series of nine perfect in form, philosophic and meditative. We quote the fifth:

We that are gods on this strange earth of ours,
Lords of creation binding wind and tide,
How in our blind insatiable false-pride,
Have we misused all of our hard-won powers ?
We that, like kind and gentle summer showers,
Should scatter lovliness so far and wide,
Spread heavenly sympathy on every side,
And strew the world with beauty's fairest flowers—
Alas ! We've been the ministers of death,
Dealing destruction and undying hate
Among our brothers and the brutes beneath,
Uprooting where, in love, we should create,
And letting ugliness, with baneful breath,
Still follow all our steps, like some grim fate.

Emersonian and Robinsonian in thought, style and philosophy, Eno's works bring satisfaction in reflective hours.

Marguerite Wilkinson's *The Great Dream* (Macmillan Co.) with her earlier works, *New Voices*, *Blue Stone* and *The Dingbat of Arcady*, characterise her as a poet of optimism. She has the happy faculty of finding the charm of things about her which her sensitive pen describes admirably. The poems portray the poet. I sought to find from Mrs. Wilkinson which poem she liked best, but the evening was so soon over and she had departed before I could turn the conversation to her work.

Subsequently in a letter she expressed her preferences as follow :

I think poets are likely to enjoy certain of their poems more than others for reasons that may be purely personal, reasons that have no value as criticism, though probably it would seldom happen that they would like their poorest work best.

I like the group of religious lyrics at the end of *The Great Dream*, and the piece of polyphonic prose called *The Rapids* rather better than the other things included, but that may be because they were written latest. Also, I like my *Adventure*, which almost nobody else does like. Is that enough of a confession ? Let me trust your taste and judgment.

The plan for an American Section in The Poetry Review does

seem to be excellent, and I am glad that you are giving adequate space to our poetry and that you are in charge of the department. I hope you will be successful and enjoy the work. It should be inspiring, I think, to be introducing American literature to a British public.

Before coming to *The Rapids*, one is attracted by the opening verse of the first poem, *The Great Dream*, which gives the title to the book:

> I have dreamed a dream of my own city,
> Manhattan of the tall towers, colorful as day,
> A giant-striding dream of my own country
> Where the three zones meet and the four winds play;
> I have dreamed a dream of my own people
> Many as stars thronging in the Milky Way."

And further:

> Then I heard the hard wind rushing toward the day,
> Shouting, "Come away, I will bear you all away,
> For I am the spirit of your long desire,
> Playing the music on an everlasting lyre,
> Come away with the wind, come away!"

Even in the dramatic account in polyphonic prose, *The Rapids*, Mrs. Wilkinson maintains the charm of poetic expression that characterises all her writings:

Around the bend music rings and sings as if the silver wings of thrice ten thousand silver birds were clashing in the air. There-there-what a chilly sound! What a trilling wild and clear beyond the bend is heard, loud, louder, without beginning, without end! Shall I see a silver pool shadowed by millions hovering, carolling, when my light canoe at last with the shining river turns, sliding past, gliding fast? Shall I see the birds that sing?

Nearer, nearer, is the song, louder now, madly humming like innumerable gigantic bees, angry bees near a hive or like buzzing echoes of fallen angels in eternity, hovering, quarrelling over time, rasping every silver throat to set the rushing sounds afloat in the air—there-there. My canoe hears the humming. Swiftly now, oh, very swiftly, to the bend I am coming.

* * *

In *Colors of the West*, Glenn Ward Dresbach (Holt and Co.) supplies poetic pictures of a distinct American character, the best of which are not mentioned in his letter, which follows :

Thank you for your interest in my poems and know that I am most heartily pleased with the magazine and its treatment of a subject so dear to us. My favourite poems in the volume *In Colors of the West* are : *In Western Mountains, I Have Always Said I Would Go, Wise Gamblers, In the Desert, Desert Songs, In An Old Woodland . . . A Mountain Lake, A Deeper Spring, Wild Apples.* My new and much better book, *The Enchanted Mesa*, will be published by Holt this Spring.

Limitations in space compel quoting only a few lines from each of Mr. Dresbach's chosen poems.

In *Western Mountains* we journey with the poet through untrodden mountain ways and

> Faint jingle of little bells
> And the half-heard shuffle of feet,
> High up on the mountain side,
> Crept down through the waves of heat,
> And a gray thread wove through the wide
> Tapestry of the mountain side.
> * * *
> There, through years of fires
> From summer suns and ashes blown
> From burned-out winter moons, that cedar clings
> To sheer rock—alone—
> Groping here with a root and there with one,
> Asserting its right to stand up in the sun,
> Or face the storm's hurled shock . . .
> And, since it was not left to grow where run
> Sweet juices of rich earth, it grows—in rock !

Desert Shadow Songs, and other poems in the book, remind one of the Remington drawings, while *Porto Bello Bay* is as vivid and compelling as a Winslow Homer. The first, second and the fifth verses follow :

> The ghost-ships waken with the moon
> In Porto Bello Bay,

And many an olden pirate tune,
Still drunken with remembered June,
Trails through the mist away.
The sails are spread, the faint lights gleam,
The ships move to the seas
As if they seek the ports of dream
Beyond the Caribbees.

The moon has spilled upon the bay
Her cup of silver wine.
The galleons turn against the tide
Their shadow prows; the ancient pride
Speaks in each shadow-line.
The glamour of their time returns;
Purged of their sin they seem—
Each seeks the port for which it yearns,
Borne on the winds of dream.
* * *
Before the moon creeps down to sleep
She calls the ghost-ships home
To harbours deep the years have made
Of purple silence and of jade
And flecks of silver foam,
And with their memories they ride
The daylight hours away,
Unseen, unmoved by any tide,
In Porto Bello Bay.
* * *

It is always a delight to open a book of sonnets, especially when it includes a goodly sprinkling of the Petrarchan form! In Mrs. Minnie Ferris Hauenstein's book *Sonnets from the Silence* (Putnam's) are 84 sonnets covering a variety of subjects, with attractive interesting titles that lead the reader on from beginning to the last with well-sustained pleasure.

Mrs. Hauenstein's personal selections follow:

IS THERE NO LAND OF LOST AND LOVELY THINGS?

Is there no land of lost and lovely things,
No bourne immutable where garnered are
The glint and gleam of sunset and of stars?—
The dawn-made music crumbling Memnon sings,

The splendour of massed clouds,—faint whisperings
Of old-world loves ;—some dream-wrought, shimmering jar
Cellini shaped,—rainbows that fling afar
Colors on rocks and seas, and robes of Kings.

Must these be thrust to dim Oblivion,
No hand to stay their transient beauty's death,
These nameless treasures men have looked upon,
Dreamed, stirred and sung to, even with dying breaths ?
No ! God, nor gods, could so betray a trust,
And bruise men's ecstasies, tho' men be dust.

MOOD DREAMS.

I sometimes think the lulling loam would be
Sweeter than Life with all its fevered rush,
Knowing a quiet grave, in hallowed hush,
On some green upland waits alone for me ;
Perchance it rests beneath a shadowy tree,
Whose branches house a silvery hermit thrush,
Where through the tiny mold-rifts evening's flush
Would light mine eyes on to eternity.

How dear would be the roots that start and cling
Under the warm throb of the April rain—
Could I not send you messages again
On their brave tendrils upward venturing ?
And yet dear heart, my only lasting cheer
Would be faint footfalls as they laid you near.

We would like to quote *Mirage*, *Wings of Song*, *A Repentant Summer*, *The Truce* and *At the Sea's Rim*, but limitation of space forbids. However, I cannot resist the octave of *At the Sea's Rim :*

Out where the wide sea meets the azure skies
Vast cities rear their splendours as we pass,
Towers whose slim heights seem like glimmering glass—
Mountains, foam flecked, that in their grandeur rise
Upon the sapphire leagues beneath our eyes—
A moment's mirage, phantom built, alas !—
Wraiths which the wind and sea and sun amass,
Gossamer dream that swoons and drifts and dies.

* * *

In *Fox Footprints* (Knopf) Elizabeth J. Coatsworth

presents a series of short poetic sketches in which Oriental imagery and fantasy remind one of the romantic, alluring imagery of old Japanese sword hilts and guards, whereon one finds depicted more about mysterious Japan of the past than can be found in histories. *Apparition*, for instance :

> The moon at the water's edge
> Is a woman dancing on silver swords,

might be depicted on the guard of a sword of the latter period, when hundreds of years of internal strife had been settled and the emperor established firmly on the throne of Japan.

Fuji follows :

> Like an empress shielding her face with her sleeve,
> Fuji stands, cloud-hid, her trailing robes
> Wide spread about her :
> To the left and right
> The courtier mountains bow low at her feet.

Miss Coatsworth's selections mentioned in a letter to me included :

THE MOUNTAINS.

It is evening.
The mountains sit, impenetrable as Buddhas,
The light falls upon their foreheads
Leaving their quiet forms and vast robes in darkness.
The sky hangs drooping above their heads
Like a canopy ;
The immense earth is awed beneath their feet.
Only the lowing of the cows and the calls of the herdboys in the meadows
Come faintly to their ears.

SPRING.

The earth's coat is the green of young willows
Beside warm streams.
It is embroidered over with flowering trees—
Plum, peach and apricot.
Her sleeves are delicately scented.
Her hair is unbound in the wind.
Even the moon is so enamoured
That before dusk he climbs the stairs of heaven to behold her.

Samphire, by John Cowper Powys (Thomas Seltzer), derives its name from Shakespeare's *King Lear*, Act IV, Scene VI:

> . . . Half way down
> Hangs one that gathers samphire, dreadful trade!
> Methinks he seems no bigger than his head.

The publisher's announcement states that "The twenty poems of *Samphire* have in them a haunting and terrible beauty. It's as though a naked spirit were suspended over the yawning abyss of the universe. They are poems of the earth and of the ultimate space, of the pollen-dust of buttercups and the gold-dust of Orion."

On the first reading I set down as my selections *The Ultimate*, *The Old Satyr*, *The Rider* and *To a Certain Lady*. Upon writing to the author to ascertain his selections, I learned from Miss Llewellyn Powys, that we are indebted to her for having convinced her brother to publish this book. Her letter adds: "His own favourites in the small volume are *The Face* and *William Corby*."

The first and last verse of *The Face* and first of *The Ultimate* follow:

> In the hollow spaces I see a face
> As I go whistling to my Dear,
> And in those lineaments I trace
> The Ultimate Fear.
>
> * * *
>
> Oh white, white lips that hang so mute,
> As I go whistling to my Love,
> That ultimate Fear would be absolute
> If you should move!
>
> * * *

THE ULTIMATE.

> So this is the Ultimate—
> That we bleed with our backs to the wall,
> While the rats and weasels of fate
> Eat at our liver and gall;
> Eat at our hearts with teeth of bane,

And tug at the sick white roots of pain
Where every man's alone,
And scrape a tune on the deep nerve-string
That is love and life and everything
And gnaw our flesh to the bone.

* * *

Frederick Mortimer Clapp's *Joshua Trees*, like his *New York and Other Verses* and *On the Overland*, reminds me that I read his works, poetry and prose, with greater interest because I know that he has been in the places he writes about and has seen the things he describes, and when I read the title "Contact," I turn eagerly to the page to see what aeroplane it is that takes to the air. Mr. Clapp was an aviator, a member of the 22nd Aero Squadron, A.E.F., and is a constant traveller. His last letter, from Naples, mentions his choices in his last two books:

You ask me which of my own poems I like best! If you mean which to my mind embody successfully the impulse underlying them, I should perhaps say *The Park*, in *New York*, and in *Joshua Trees*, *The Monkey Cage* and *Words*. I wonder what you think of these? *The Monkey Cage* is more significant and "classic" than the others and capable of setting up more reverberations. Or do I deceive myself?

Neither of Mr. Clapp's books contain a single poem in form. It is all free verse, very free, as will be noted from the following excerpts from the *Monkey Cage:*

Give me strength on this foggy morning,
when all the pyramidal pines are flat and flimsy
as black and white drop-curtains easy to lunge through,
and the live oaks, hugging one another,
are immense toadstools.
Black-purple on the blue mist
—nothing to knock over;
give me strength to make something
out of the ice-cold iron I have been tugging at.

Shall I twist it like a hairpin
and make an instrument to measure a star?
Shall I brain an enemy with it?
Shall I flail out the seed of tribulation
into penance and a slave's salvation?

Or praise God on a vertical trapeze
putting Swedish gymnastics into another dimension ?

The first and last verses of *Words* express charm and intellectual depth :

From high up among interwoven branches
that make black rivers against my mind's moonlight,
words let go of their chilled twigs
and spinning drift downward
through the inner stillness of my meditation.

* * *

The flash and hurrying clamour of the highway ;
the unceasing rumble of its wheels ;
the unresting pattering and shuffle of feet ;
and out of the moonlit silver plains and black rivers of my mind
sifting downward through the sacred stillness
of my meditation,
magic unavailing words.

To the author's own selection should be added *The Brooklyn Bridge*, *Leaving California* and *Northern Lights*.

ALICE HUNT BARTLETT.

HIGH NOON

WITHIN this ancient wood, remote and still,
A cool, green, grateful quiet wraps me 'round ;
The brooding west-wind brings no harsher sound
Than some brave red-cap's predatory bill
That dares the Druid oak ; and, far above,
His notes slow-weaving through the crested pines,
A pensive wood-guest, priest of tender shrines,
Woos with fond cadences his listening love.
How confident this all-embracing ease !
Lost in a mood of rare content, I gaze
Upward and, through the beryl-tinted maze
Close-laced by boughs of time-defying trees,
Drift nigh to dreams, watching with drowsy eyes
The mazy dance of bright, ephemeral flies.

MARY COLES CARRINGTON.

Richmond, Virginia.

AMERICAN SURVEY:

Previous Surveys.—In May–June, 1923: THE INTERNATIONALISM OF POETRY; In July–August: THE ULTIMATE WEST IN POETRY; In September–October: THE BARDS OF THE SOUTH AND SOUTH-WEST; in March–April, 1924: VOICES FROM THE GREAT INLAND STATES.

THE GREAT INLAND STATES: Illinois—II

IN our last Survey we reviewed the works of Carl Sandburg and Vachel Lindsay, Illinois poets, referring also to Edgar Lee Masters, Eugene Field, H. C. Chatfield-Taylor, Horace S. Fiske, Elizabeth Gordon, Ring W. Larner, and mentioned the fact that the first book of poetry in Illinois was published in 1845, *Miscellaneous Poems* of William Asbury Kenyon.

Hundreds of names could be quoted of poets and authors whose names are familiar as prose writers, but who wrote occasional poems, and "schools" were founded and grew and carry on the poetic torch as, for instance, the Miss Harriet Monroe's school, the Illinois Poetry Society and the Poetry Club of the University of Chicago—all of whom belong to the great school of Illinois, inspired by the poetry of that great state, which moved Edward Lee Masters to write in the poem of Illinois:

ILLINOIS.

Illinois, an empire is thine of billowy fields of glory,
Meadows of stretching green and forests whose depths are cool,
Hills that brighten in spring o'er rivers that tell a story
Of peace in the June-days mirrored in many a lucent pool.

Measureless miles of sunlight lie on the flowerful meadows,
Flamed with the clover blooms, with purple flags by the mere.
Deep in the maple woods is the silence of restful shadows,
Where the cry of the restless jay is joyful and clear.

Yes, if the whole world barred us, still the bountiful season
Would garner a faison of fruit and of golden grain

Blessed is this land of ours, a stranger to nature's treason,
Which smiles 'neath the mingled graces of sun and rain.

Thine is a sturdy race, a bulwark in days of peril;
Whose children are fit for the field or the hall of state.
Rich is this soil of mind, nor shall it ever grow sterile
While the great Republic thrills with a sense of fate.

Here shall our epic thrive in the ages hereafter.
Song of a noble race, its growth is already begun.
All that was done before shall be food for the High God's laughter—
The flower of Art is the child of the soil and sun.

Here War is the thrall of Peace, give us the epic of gladness,
The triumph and not the trial, the victory of mankind;
When Science has stilled the ghosts of the old world's sadness
And Art is a glorious hymn of the perfect mind.

Hundreds of names occur to us as we seek to record the outstanding contributors to the poetry of Illinois.

Some are more poets than prose writers, others are more philosophers than poets, as in the case of Lew Starrett, who challenges philosophers and theologians alike in his ***Pantheist*** and, in Emersonian sternness, states "that fact is, the fact of God," then tempers his sternness with these beautiful lines:

When I drift out on a silver sea
O may it be
A blue night
With a white moon
And a sprinkling of stars in the cedar tree:
And the silence of God
And the low call
Of a lone bird—
When I drift out on the silver sea.

Edgar Lee Masters deserves an extensive review, but so do a score of others, among them, to mention a few:

John Gould Fletcher, author of *Visions of the Evening* (Erskine Macdonald, 1912), *Fire and Wine*, *Irradiations* (1913), *Sand and Spray* (1915), *Goblins and Pergolas* (1916), *Japanese Prints* (1918), *The Tree of Life* (1918), *Breakers*

and Granite (1921), *Paul Gaugin* (1921); Elizabeth Gordon, author of *A Sheaf of Roses;* Hancock La Touche, author of *Desultory Verse;* Ezra Pound, Ben Hecht, Sherwood Anderson, Keith Preston, Gene Markey, Maxwell Bodenheim, Henry Justin Smith (who said with urbane irony, "I have a healthy contempt for the whole human race . . . I am the only one of four major poets of America who has never won a prize"), Sinclair Lewis, Eunice Tietjens, Sade Iverson, Margaret Anderson, Vincent Starrett, Stephen Crane.

Many of the Illinois poets were not born in that state, but they grew in poetic inspiration or production there. This was true of Sherwood Anderson, dreamer, philosopher, corn-fed mystic, torn loose from the factory, asserting always that only truth and honesty matter! A diversified writer waking to his literary life first in Camden, Ohio, his early home, writing finally with the Chicago group until he went to London and Paris and, last, New York in 1922. It is said of him he reads women's souls like Freud. We may also mention the names of Llewellyn Jones and Robert Herrick, a calm unemotional New-Englander transplanted to the heart of the West, and others who found their muses in the State of Illinois.

In the case of Lew Starrett, he went to the University of Michigan and in 1911 to Harvard to study law. At 23 he was offered a post in the University of Illinois. Among his writings are *The Box of God* (Holt & Co.), *The Great Divide* and *In Many Moods* (Holt & Co.).

Illinois sonnetteers who produced fine Petrarchan sonnets include Thomas Kennedy, George Seymour, Vincent Starrett, Basil Thompson. *Per contra* Carl Sandburg wrote "Think what Shakspere could have done with the emotion behind the sonnets if he had been free, not bound by any verse-form."

One of the forces in the evolution of poetic expression of the present generation in Illinois has been Miss Monroe's magazine *Poetry, a Magazine of Verse.* More perhaps than any other factor it has served as a stimulant and enlightener. We find through the twelve years of its history the names

of many writers now established as integral parts of American Poetry who first became known through the pages of this progressive periodical. These twelve years have been over-running with many interesting phases of conflict and development: Masters reaching a height of popularity, Sandburg and Lindsay growing forces in our American life and poetry, and treading on their heels are many others grown in the ambient atmosphere of the poetic centre of the State of Illinois.

Lacking the space to quote from the works of all the worthy pens mentioned, let us return to Edgar Lee Masters' works. Masters was born in the town of Garnet, Kansas, 1869. He studied for the bar and was admitted to practice in 1891. But literature proved more attractive than law. Instead of a record of cases won in the Courts of Justice, he has a long list of good books to his credit, among them *A Book of Verse* (Way and Williams, 1898), *Songs and Satires* (Macmillan, 1910), *Songs and Sonnets* (Rooks Press, 1910), *The Locket Play* (Rooks Press, 1910), *The Bread of Idleness*, play (Rooks Press, 1910), *Spoon River Anthology* (Macmillan, 1918), *Starved Rock* (Macmillan, 1919), *Mitch Miller* (Macmillan, 1920), *The Nuptial Flight* (Macmillan, 1923), *Skeeters Kerby*, a novel, 1923, and more.

In various moods, through over twenty-five years, Masters has expressed appreciation for beauty, mingled with lofty philosophy which occasionally betrays consciousness of the ultimate singleness and isolation that reminds us of Keats—"The thought, the deadly feel, of solitude"—and Coleridge's—"So lonely 'twas that God himself scarce seemed there to be." His *Relatedness* from his *A Book of Verse* is an exception to this:

> All things are related, the inventor's thought
> Has modelled the iron and shaped its form,
> And lo, something new on the earth is wrought,
> And the blood of the million is flowing warm.
>
> And the poet who looks from his eagle height
> Has searched its meaning within his mind—
> The simile, figure, the spiritual light
> Which gives a new hope to mankind.

Giving the fourth stanza from his *The Fifth Act*:

> One day is the same and one week is the same with the rest;
> Grey skies are as futile as fair, for the soul, like a well
> Deep down in the earth, of the heaven is baned nor blest.
> It hath its own blackness; no light, save the light of hell—
> When the spirit is dull and dumb.

Again in *The Desplaines Forest*, the note of solitude persists: after a fine picture of the forest, quoting

> 'till revery reclaims
> The mind from hurried thought and merges it
> Into the universal mind which brands it
> O'er such a scene. Strange quietude o'erspreads
> The restless flame of being, and the soul
> Beholds its source and destiny and feels
> Not sorrowful to sink into the breast
> Of that large life whereof it is a part.
> What are we? But the question is not solved
> Here in the pressure of intensest thought;
> Where nature stills the clamor of the world
> And leaves us in communion with ourselves.
> Hence to the strivings of the clear-eyed day
> What take we that shall mitigate the pangs
> That each soul is alone, and that all friends
> Gentle and wise and good can never soothe
> The ache of that sub-consciousness which is
> Something unfathomed and unmedicined.

Again in *An Etching:*

> The dull sky and the yellow meads;
> And the stripped trees moaning in the blast.
> The mind that thinks, and the heart that bleeds;
> The unborn day and the buried past,
> And this gray Sphinx called Life.

Napoleon Before the Pyramids is a striking portrait. It goes without saying, however, that Mr. Masters' great popularity came with his *Spoon River Anthology*, thanks to Wm. Marion Reedy, editor of *Reedy's Mirror*, where it appeared from week to week from May 29, 1914.

ALICE HUNT BARTLETT.

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HOW DO YOUR POEMS COME?

The questionnaire, now so common among "copy-making" journalists and pseudo-scientists who think they can reduce everything to a common denominator and schedule all human processes, has been extended to the subject of verse-writing. The clever and inexhaustible "C. E. B." of the *Evening News* (London) has dealt very effectively with one of these materialistic inquisitors. His answers to this examination paper for poets will be appreciated by other verse-writers, whether they have been subjected to the inquiry or not. "In a covering letter," he says, "the professor pointed out the difficulty of obtaining reliable information from Shakespeare or Tennyson, but expressed the hope that he could get it from me.

"I have sat for a number of examinations and my record of failure is, I think, unbroken. But I never yet faced an examination paper before which I felt so entirely helpless. Still, I will do my best with the unlucky 13 questions.

"(1) *Q*. Describe your attitude towards the versification of the poem you are about to write?—*A*. Anything from friendliness to open hostility.

"(2) *Q*. How does the verse form come to you?—*A*. Like the income-tax form. I do not have to apply for it.

"(3) *Q*. Do you settle beforehand the metre in which you are to write?—*A*. No. It is an accident for which I disclaim all responsibility.

"(4) *Q*. Do you think of the forms of iambus, trochee, anapest, and dactyl?—*A*. No, I strive to keep my mind on pleasant subjects.

"(5) *Q*. Do you settle the number of stressed and unstressed syllables?—*A*. I never thought of it, but it's an idea.

"(6) *Q*. Or do you settle on the number of stressed syllables alone?—*A*. That would certainly seem to be simpler.

"(7) *Q*. Or do you feel that there must be a certain number of beats to a line and that the syllables may take care of themselves?——*A*. Better and better. I haven't; but I will.

"(8) *Q*. Or do you simply write the thoughts as they come, with no thought of rhyme or metre?—*A*. I hope my verses don't look like that.

"(9) *Q*. Do you feel a demand for metre?—*A*. Yes, acutely.

"(10) *Q*. Where does it come from?—*A*. From the gas and electric light companies.

"(11) *Q*. How do you regulate your lines?—*A*. By making them as regular as possible.

"(12) *Q*. How do you get your poems?—*A*. By theft, where possible; otherwise I have to make them up.

"(13) *Q*. Why do you write them?—*A*. Ah! If I knew that I might be able to break myself of the habit."

A ROBUST NEW POET

AT the present time, when we can say with even more reason than Sir Philip Sidney in 1581, "Now swarm many versifiers that need never answer to the name of poets," there is all the more satisfaction in coming upon the work of a new writer whose first book, *The Ballad of Life and Death* (Kegan Paul, 1924, 3s. 6d.), shows so much masculine vigour, and so pungent a disdain of hypocrisy or superficiality, that we find ourselves wondering whether this recent recruit to the ranks of verse-writers will not soon be heard of again, for he shows such force and fire as to suggest innate power of leadership.

So far as we are aware the name of Oscar Boulton has not appeared in print hitherto in any literary connection; but the chief contents of the modest-looking blue-coated volume bespeak a mind steeped in love of letters, critical, fastidious and cultured, as well as what is commonly termed "original." So varied, so individual, so complex, are his poems, that no reviewer can convey through mere description or quotation any adequate idea of the book as a whole. Like his own *Harper*, Oscar Boulton ranges from "the old tales, the told tales, that seem for ever new," from lyric verse to narrative and elegiac, from devout intensity of "the heroicall" (again to quote Sir Philip Sidney) to good-humoured irony; and he flashes now and then into sarcasm keen as a rapier to prick the balloons of "Blind Error, scornful Folly and base Spite."* It comes naturally here to remember the great Elizabethans, as he resembles them (perhaps unconsciously) in the blending of joyous freshness, keen delight in natural beauty, with robust manliness of spirit and a proud consciousness that he as an Englishman has a great inheritance. It ill becomes a member of one of the ruling races of the world to abdicate from individual or national dignity, he seems to tell us.

His verse, in its changes from grave to comical, from transcendental to derisive, may bewilder those who relegate pathos and humour to different air-tight compartments. Even some who regard life as a tragi-comedy ("a tragedy to him who feels and a comedy to him who thinks"), and are as alive to its sublimity as its absurdity, may find the swiftness of transition from one mood to another almost too abrupt in *The Ballad of Life and Death*. Every now and then it is as if the writer, after delighting us with an exquisite melody, and with the blended beauty of emotion, aspiration, and expression, suddenly elects to crash in upon our exaltation with a vehement discord. And if we protested, he would probably retort that in this also he is true to reality, as opposed to the artificial "realism" for which he has an unmitigated dislike.

* Spenser, *The Tears of the Muses*, 1591.

Though he has, on his own confession, loved literature well, his standpoint is never academic. "To what do you attribute your success as a leader of men?" an enquiring observer once asked a British General, famous alike for personal magnetism and stern sense of discipline; and the answer was given in one word, "Sympathy." Similarly in the case of Oscar Boulton, his sympathy with human nature, his power of imagining the standpoint of many temperaments other than his own, his sad consciousness of the difference between what should be and what too often *is*, save even his sternest utterances from being acrimonious. His severity and tenderness, his faith and melancholy, come all from the same source; and whether he is picturing an eternal reality of truth and flawless beauty in regions far beyond our sorrowful planet, or dealing severely with what *is*—denouncing some age-long folly masquerading under pretence of novelty—he is ever constructive in his thoughts; seeking to preserve good, transmute evil, and unveil humbug. As to reckoning progress merely by the passage of time, or by "frenzied moves in any vague direction," for this frame of mind he has no tolerance:

> "Good laws! good government! shall this be test,
> Since Rome held sway, is man in truth much mended?
> Have we surpassed wise Athens at her best,
> Or have we yet begun where Egypt ended?"

From our own national history he draws frequent reinforcement. He who would foresee to-morrow must understand yesterday, is his dictum; and only the most superficial or indolent will dispute it. Each man—we are made to feel—whether his ancestry is demonstrated in accessible documents or recorded only in Heaven's register, is made up of many effects and causes. Man would therefore be better occupied in learning to "know himself" (as the classic sages used to advise) than in asserting an impossible freedom, a preposterous detachment; for, willingly or not, he is of his own race and his own country; and the impulses which stir in him have grown from seeds sown long before he came into being. He has reason, memory, and the power of choice between the better and worse; but let him not boast an impossible independence while tumbling into slavery! Every man is the son of his own works; but his works will be inadequate, his powers restricted, his spirit half asleep, unless he deliberately comes in to his heritage of the wisdom of the ages, and knows how to value the heroism of heroes, the inspiration of poets, not forgetting the chivalry of those spiritual warriors who, whether literally or metaphorically,

"Rode forth with dark forebodings, yet still with courage high,
To die for hopeless causes, as honour bade them die."*

To insincerity Oscar Boulton is pitiless; to honest error he is compassionate:

"In faith's ordeal the weakest wax sublime,
The mightiest fail, and He that knoweth all
Knows from what depths repentant sinners climb,
And from what heights rebellious seraphs fall."

The reviewer who attempts quotation in this case is bound to mislead; for unless he had unlimited space he could not give a specimen of each different aspect of Boulton's verse; and it is chiefly in the blend and variety of qualities that this writer's individuality consists; so much so that six different reviewers might by their selections give in each instance a totally different impression. The book is one which may arouse antagonism in minds which think to honour the present by neglecting the past. To the present critic, the verse of Oscar Boulton is of interest largely as suggesting further achievements to come. *The Pageant of Ancestry*, with its graphic panorama of characters and events, each one poignant, vivid, and palpitating, suggests a creative power which would make a remarkable novelist; the psychological analysis and dramatic narrative power are both evident; as evident as love of nature.

"a glamour dwells
In nature's rarer moods, which yours must match,
When touched by some divine enchanter's spells
The secret of her soul you seem to catch."

"Which yours must match"—here is the point. The race may not always be to the swift nor the battle to the strong; but in poetry and life man sees what it is in him to see. Therefore, says our new poet, let him confront the world with "courage and candour"; let him go forth as a knight-errant upon a high and honourable quest; for though he be chained to a desk and weary from struggling for grim prosaic necessities, yet he carries in himself faculties by which, if he so chooses, he may become aware how "Ethereal waves break in from worlds uncharted." Past, present and future, time and eternity, are not for Oscar Boulton separated, or to be considered apart. They are portions of an ever-living "Now." The dead are not dead; least of all are those "dead" who gave themselves *pro Deo, pro Rege et Patria*. And however uphill the way may seem, however loud and strident the confusion, however irreparable on earth the loss and sorrow, the ultimate victory can be hastened by each one of us who aspires, endures, and refuses to compromise.

E. M. TENISON.

* *The Harper.*

TOLSTOI, THOMAS HARDY, AND OTHERS.*

IT is rather difficult to judge the translation of an American, for though, roughly speaking, we both speak the same language, yet it is the endless small differences between them that supply the impediment. This fact is mostly emphasised where colloquialism is in use. A Russian dialect translated into American slang does not form very convincing peasant talk to British ears. Still this is more a misfortune than a fault, and it takes more than that to detract from the genius of Tolstoi. In this edition, that follows the original and uncensored text, we feel the Count's virile personality very strongly and are face to face with the problems that beset his mind and influenced his conduct. There is stark realism in *The Power of Darkness*, a tale of sordid peasant existence, and a delightful humour, tempered with cynicism, in *Fruits of Enlightment*, a play that mocks at the idiosyncrasies of a rich Russian household of the old regime. Three other dramas forcibly illustrate the drink evil, and one, *The Live Corpse*, views upon the question of divorce, while that entitled *Light Shines in Darkness* epitomises the author's own struggle to find and follow the Truth. Even if the translator fails to give us "atmosphere" at times, he always succeeds in exhibiting to us the conflicting forces that racked the mind of the Prince of Socialists.

And then back to Tintagel and the old-new romantic tragedy of crossed loves and bitter marriage vows. Mr. Hardy gives us the tale of the two Iseults as a play for mummers, in one act, and requiring no scenery. The action takes place in the hall of Tintagel Castle, whither Tristram painfully journeys, newly risen from his bed of sickness, to disprove the false report of his own death. His harper's disguise and the fate he met at the treacherous hands of King Mark are all part of the familiar story, but the particular setting and the introduction of a chorus of attendants to declare the development of the plot, as in the Greek plays, are Mr. Hardy's own method of presentation. It is needless to say that this is a powerful and an emotional one.

Of Margaret George it surely may be said that "Those whom the Gods love die young," for the Muses had bestowed rare gifts upon her. I wonder if it is a true kindness though to publish all her early poems, for though many show great promise, yet they show all the faults of immaturity as well, and we prefer to hide our short-

* *Tolstoi's Dramas*, Nathan Haskell Dole (Harrap).—*The Famous Tragedy of the Queen of Cornwall*, Thomas Hardy (MacMillian).—*Yorrick and Three Short Plays, Pierello and Notapenny, Poems of a Short Life*, Margaret George (Harrap).—*Dale Dramas*, Dorothy Una Ratcliffe (The Bodley Head).

comings. Her masterpiece is the dramatic poem *Yorrick*, an exposition of the character of the Danish Prince by the old jester some years before the curtain rings up on Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. I was carried away by the beauty of the wording as much as by the subtle intuition of the Prince's pyschology. The Three Short Plays bound in the same volume are well worth reading. In one, *Quid est Veritas*, the appeal of Pontius Pilate is, I imagine, the crystallised feeling of a good many Christians to-day who would like to see his name deleted from the Creeds. One word more about her fairy stories. Some fairy tales have worn thin with telling, and others are too thin to begin to tell, but in *Pierello* and in *Notapenny* we get the most convincing impossibilities told in the most delicious way. Pierello's road to fairy-land lay through the bonfire smoke, the nicest way in the world, but what I chiefly enjoyed were the little live houses, *Spinnikins* and *Trinklepeek*, who twiddle round and wink their windows while they talk to you.

It is not necessary to be Yorkshire bred and born to appreciate the *Dale Dramas*. Their author evidently possesses a rare fund of human sympathy and invests her characters with simplicity, pathos, dignity and that indefiniable something we call charm. Though most of them belong to the present day and are "of the people," Mary Queen of Scots is treated with equal skill and is quite as much alive as they.

EVELYN D. BANGAY.

* * *

As a further appendix to Mrs. Winder's article in our last issue we have to refer to several books of children's verse that have since come to hand:—*Sweet Canada* (12 Bird Songs and a Round, words and music by Louise Murray. Longmans, Green and Co. 2s. 6d. net) is a delightful little book with a fresh, original and individual note. The characteristic song-calls of Canadian birds have been skilfully used as *motifs* for several of the little songs, and the music has a nationally distinct Canadian tang, difficult and elusive to define, but there, nevertheless, and to be enjoyed by those sensitive to atmosphere in music. One of the songs is a really good marching tune to words in praise of the North West Mounted Police, that splendid corps of men who rule a vast country by sheer force of prestige. *The Rosemary Song Book* (words by K. E. Flewin, music by Lillian G. Short. George G. Harrap and Co. 3s. 6d. net) is another very successful book of children's songs, in which the words and music are well matched and balanced. The songs are tuneful and easy without being

banal and should be a godsend to musical children. In the best books of poetry about children, such as Stevenson's *Child's Garden of Verses* or *The Littlest One* of Mrs. Webb, there is a definite expression of one child's personality running through all the poems. And in Miss Anne Macdonald's *Dormer Windows* (with illustrations by Mildred R. Lamb. Oxford. Blackwell. 1923. 3s. 6d. net), charming as some of them are taken separately, they lose their effect very largely when read together because they are written from such different angles. In some a young child is speaking, whilst others are didactic. Some are almost Cautionary Tales, whilst others have an adult note. The result in such a small collection is rather distracting and discounts the quite excellent workmanship of some of the best of the verses.

* * *

ALL FOR A CHILD.

Sir Michael Sadler sends us some poems by a young native of Southern India, who, like many of his countrymen, "aspires to win laurels in the world of English letters," knowing full well the difficulties of mastering an unfamiliar technique. Happily, while attempting to improve in form, and with considerable success, this Eastern student does not westernize his expression and outlook over much. The sonnet printed below is characteristically Indian in feeling; it is also of interest as showing how this Telegu-speaking youth expresses himself in the English language.

My strength, my health, my wealth, my joy and pride,
My heart and mind, my art, my life, so sweet,
My soul, my being whole and all beside,
If aught beside I have, all at Thy feet
Would I now lay with joy, all for a child,
A child, O Lord, of all Thy blessings best!
I yearn to flow'r, my very roots are wild.
Burning for fruit! Have mercy, make me blest!
From 'mong the Cherubs' throng circling Thy throne
In Heaven's boundless Hall awaiting birth
On wings of love send down a sprite alone
To me a single angel on this earth!
Oh! Bless me with a baby fair, I pray:
Let me but see its face and pass away.

S. M. MICHAEL.

Ramnad, S. India.

THE PREMIUM EDITOR ON STYLE

THE perfect style imparts its content of thought without calling any attention to itself, whether by errors of syntax or by cleverishness of phrase. The secretary of a famous Manchester literary club, who always begins his annual circular: "We will be very pleased . . .", must surely hold his post on account of excellent *business* qualifications, for these things annoy the educated ear; they are grit in the educated eye; yet they are becoming very common. *A* for "*An* historic occasion," "didn't have" for "hadn't," mis-spellings and freak spellings, such as s*k*eptic, *k*inema, Al*k*estis and *k*enotaph (not to mention *mikroskope*), undue care not to "split" an infinitive (often combined with the gayest surgery on other composite verb-forms)—these and similar things distract the mind from the desired focus, the thought.

If these things are important in the dry leaf of journalism and commercial correspondence, how much more in attempted poetry! No writer can afford to use poetic licence—and one wonders at times who invented the idea: poetic licence is as mythical as the cabin-boy of the nautical songs, or as Mrs. 'Arris.

Twist your words about to fit them into a line, and you ruin your message as certainly as would a preacher who indulged in "physical jerks" in the pulpit. One must aim at being natural without becoming commonplace. In conversation, one may easily use the same word twice in the same breath; one may even misuse words with a certain impunity due to the animated tone and gesture: it will not "do" in writing, least of all in poetry; the attention immediately registers the point, and this to the neglect of the message.

A kindred trouble is impropriety of epithet and metaphor. Too much is often made of the bogy of mixed metaphors, because it is forgotten that a much-used metaphor may at last reasonably claim its accustomed significance as its absolute meaning. Thus "tribulation" is never now employed in the sense of "threshing." If the writer will keep a critical eye on this point, however, he needs no external help in the matter, and he will not then send up such lines as "fulfil the goal of my desire," "and free my spirit from a slow decay," "thought *runs* in little narrow *stagnant* grooves," "this dream that I have woven with my blood," though in the last case the reference is perhaps to the fibrin!

All these faults may, of course, be found in the great poets, and even Homer may nod. Wordsworth provides us with one of the best terrible examples I know of two nouns in apposition for the sake of padding:

> . . . a crowd,
> A host, of golden daffodils.

Appositions are impossible in poetry because every epithet used must be strangely and convincingly *right*. Then any addition is redundant. In any case, only one shot is allowed.

Twentieth century poetry is amazing in its quantity, tidal in its quality; but there is a certain sameness about its undoubted beauty. In my mind, Miss Honor Leeke's verses stand apart from the rest with an individuality which I have tried to analyse. They remind me of a curious experience. On a summer evening, at a bend in a road, I came upon the sea. I saw, through the blue, fluid dusk, white stones on a shelving beach, edged by the unbroken surface of water. That is a catalogue of what I saw, but what I felt was that "rarer light *in* light," which we call—*glamour*. I am sure that her forthcoming book will bring a new wonder and beauty into many a life. This month she sends us two poems "From the Highlands," one of which is quite short: you should read it aloud.

THE BURN. By Honor F. Leeke.

The seven changes of his grey chimes
Are rung down the stones—
Seven—and seven—and seven times
The seven changes of his grey chimes
Are rung by the Enchanted Ones.
And ever there tinkles and drones
In seven undiscovered tones
The music of his grey chimes,
Rung down the stones
By the Enchanted Ones.

You may analyse this and relate the persistence of the burn to the return of the rhyme, and so on and so forth, but don't try to imitate it. For this is inspiration.

Victor Ballan sends some more fine work, worth a good deal of trouble in criticism; I retain his poems for a time with this in view. We cannot, of course, offer free criticism to one and take payment from another. He had better send 5s.

Miss E. E. Warner writes:

FAITH.

The west wind blows,
The sunflowers nod,
My baby grows—
Who dares doubt God?

Well, that is fine; but she should stop there. The following two

verses are worthless, in that they add nothing and are mere anti-climax. Mrs. Stewart's *The Promise* must rhyme the first and third lines in her first verse ; that will remedy its only flaw.

There are fourteen or fifteen poems among the remainder which I have read with delight—and that after a day of verse-reading ! There is no doubt, however, that the prize must go to Miss Nancy Pollok, 19, Balmoral Crescent, Queen's Park, Glasgow, for *In the Rain.*

The six books are awarded to :—

Miss Phyllis Hastings, 116, Church Lane, Handsworth Wood, Birmingham.

Miss Bertha Annakin, 14, Franklin Road, Harrogate.

Mr. Cyril G. Taylor, Reed Vale, Teignmouth.

Mr. F. A. Carter, Church Green, Kirkburton, Huddersfield.

Miss Marjorie E. Procter, 63, Bedford Avenue, High Barnet, Herts.

Miss Coralie Howard Haman, 1511, Park Avenue, Baltimore, Maryland.

The entries of the following are worthy of high praise : S. M. Goode, V. Le Maistre, N. J. Kessler, Madeline Mason Manheim, Una Malleson, " C.L.," G. M. Archer, Siola Hawker, D. F. Radford, Janet Atkinson, Evelyn Hayes and Rosa A. Langtry.

O. C. DE C. E.

The usual general premium of £2 for the best poem or poems submitted to the Premium Editor during the month (without limitation of subject) is continued, and six books will be awarded to the " highly commended."

Not more than *two* poems may be submitted at the same time.

Every entry must be certified as original and as not having appeared in print, and the name and address of the competitor must be attached to the MS.

If criticism is desired, 2s. 6d. and a stamped addressed envelope must be enclosed. (If a more detailed postal criticism is desired, 5s. and a stamped addressed envelope should be sent.)

Entries must be either typewritten or written in ink on one side of the paper only, and contributors must be members of the Poetry Society or registered postal subscribers to THE POETRY REVIEW.

All MSS. submitted for premium awards should be addressed to "The Premium Editor." Entries cannot be returned, but they must remain at the disposal of the Editor (whether awarded a premium or not) until after the issue of the next number of THE POETRY REVIEW, in which the award will be published, and they may be published in THE POETRY REVIEW or elsewhere at the Editor's option.

FORTY GUINEAS ($200) IN PREMIUMS.

Our Associate Editor's offer of fifty dollars for a City Sonnet has now been increased to $100 or twenty guineas as premiums (one major award and several minor or regional awards at the discretion of the Adjudicators) for the best City Sonnets,—poems in sonnet form descriptive of the individuality, soul and charm of any town, a wide interpretation being given to the term "city," which may be taken to embrace one's home town, however apparently insignificant, as well as the big capital cities of the world.

All entries must be addressed as before to Mrs. Bartlett (27, West 67th Street, New York, U.S.A.) in envelopes endorsed "City Sonnet" in top left-hand corner before May 31st, 1924, an extension of date to meet the wishes of Far-East contributors.

SIXTY BOOK PRIZES FOR CHILDREN'S VERSE.

As announced in our last issue, Mrs. Clover Boldt Miles, of Park Avenue, New York, has provided us with ten dollars on behalf of her 13-year-old daughter, Clover Wotherspoon Miles, as the nucleus of a Junior Verse Contest. This has been increased, and devoted to the provision of book prizes, thus inaugurating the first of a series of Young People's Premiums by offering, in conjunction with the publishers concerned, a total of sixty desirable book prizes. Messrs. W. Collins, Son & Co. enable us to include as prizes for the premier awards twelve copies of Mrs. Meynell's *School of Poetry*; Messrs. Methuen add twelve copies of Mr. Philip Wayne's *Children's Book of Lyrics*, and Messrs. J. M. Dent & Son twelve copies of the *Junior Poetry Book* from their King's Treasury series (which we have recommended from time to time in THE POETRY REVIEW and to teachers of verse speaking), supplemented by twelve copies each of *Little Folk and Fairy Folk*, by D. F. Dalston, recently a mistress at Streatham Hill High School, and *Rainbow Lanterns*, by Emily Lewis. Half of these volumes will be awarded for little poems by authors under 11 years of age, and the remainder will be reserved for contributors between the ages of 11 and 16 years. It is proposed that the first prize in each section shall be one of each of the books offered, the other 25 in each case being utilised for 25 minor awards in order of merit. Not more than two poems may be submitted by or on behalf of any competitor, and each MS. must bear the name and address of the writer and an endorsement of authenticity by a parent or teacher, who must be a member of the Poetry Society. School teachers, however, may send in batches of poems by their pupils, and in the event of any large number being received from any particular school or teacher a special additional prize or prizes may be provided, thus constituting a competition within the major

general contest. All MSS. should be addressed to the Children's Verse Editor, POETRY REVIEW, 16, Featherstone Buildings, London, W.C.1, on or before May 31st, 1924.

A STAR SONNET CONTEST.

The Aries Book Company, of Buffalo, N.Y., publishers of *Niagara*, by Miss Evelyn M. Watson, enable us to offer a prize of fifty dollars under conditions mentioned below. This is done because the author of *Kingdom Beautiful* and *Divine Fire and Other Poems* has never seen the stars and desires to know what the poets see and feel concerning them. Her forthcoming volume *Flame of Stars* will carry her mystic impressions only.

Poets who have seen stars of great beauty, or who remember the skies during some great emotional crisis, will write accordingly, but it is urged that the sonnets and other poems (we will consider other poems, too) will be as descriptive as possible. This poet, who has been more than patient under several handicaps, including loss of sight, has great desire to know what stars *look like*, particularly to poets, and she is especially desirous of finding what artists of other lands behold in the glorious firmament.

As to form : the sonnets should follow the specifications laid down for the Sea Sonnet and the City Sonnet Contests. Other poems submitted should not exceed twenty-four lines and will not be printed in the POETRY REVIEW, but will be reserved for a possible Star Anthology to be put out by the Aries Book Club.

The fifty dollars will be divided so that forty dollars will go to the writers of Sonnets : two sonnets will be deemed the best two, and twenty dollars will go to each author. There will be three honorable mentions and a list finally of the twenty-five best writers of sonnets. Ten dollars will be paid for the best Star poem of another nature not to exceed twenty-four lines. The best poems not sonnets will be reserved as stated above, and honour classifications will be given the authors according to merit.

Miss Watson's poem *Flame of Stars* gives an idea of what she wants a description to tell—not only what impressions stars give but also what they look like. The concrete beauty of stars or a single star will give a stronger poetic offering for this purpose, doubtless for any purpose, than simply telling how the author feels and that only. The poems must have an objective as well as a subjective aspect, *both* are possible.

All MSS. must be received by Mrs. Bartlett, 27, West 67th Street, New York, by September 15th, and the envelopes should be marked " POETRY REVIEW Star Sonnet," in top left-hand corner.

THE PARR-GERE MUSIC POEM CONTEST.

Mrs. Florence Parr-Gere, the composer, of New York and Paris, where her songs and chamber music works and piano pieces have great vogue, places fifty dollars at our disposal for an international contest for the best poem on the subject of music.

The Parr-Gere Music Poem Contest is open to members and subscribers, and there are no limitations as to form.

While being intended as a companion contest to the Bartlett Sea-Sonnet Prize Contest, the City Sonnet Contest, and the Watson Star Sonnet Contest, it was thought that while the sonnet form of poetry is an especially musical form, the different forms of poetry have different lyric qualities.

Therefore entries may be poems of any form, not to exceed 32 lines, and may consist of a series of four sonnets or otherwise.

All entries must be addressed as before to Mrs. W. Hunt Bartlett, 27 West 67th Street, New York City, in envelopes endorsed in top left-hand corner "Music Poem." Entries must remain at the disposal of the Editor until one month following the publication of the awards. The closing date will be November 30th, 1924. As MS. submitted in competition cannot be returned, contributors should keep a copy of their poems.

One of the purposes of the Parr-Gere Music Poem Contest is to secure the highest expression about music.

Longfellow said: "Music is the universal language of mankind," Jean Paul Richter that "Music is the poetry of the air," and Byron wrote "There is music in all things if men had ears." Can the poets of to-day improve upon these expressions, or can they see music in a deeper, broader relationship to ourselves?

Mrs. Parr-Gere, whose works are known on both sides of the Atlantic, intends to give the winning poem a musical setting.

THE ANNUAL GENERAL BUSINESS MEETING of the Poetry Society will be held at the University of London, South Kensington, on Saturday, June 21st, at 3 p.m. Business: The Annual Financial Statement, the Annual Reports of the Hon. Treasurer and Secretary, Appointment of Auditor, Election of Council. The names of delegates representing centres should be sent to the General Secretary at the Head Office of the Society, 16, Featherstone Buildings, London, W.C.1, not later than June 10th.

If any member has any proposal which he wishes to make or bring before the Annual Meeting he shall give 28 days' written notice thereof to the Secretary. Nominations for membership of the General Council must be made by two members of the General Council or three unattached members 28 days prior to the date of the meeting.

A YEAR AT SHEFFIELD.

The centre here, now a year old, looks back with less complacency than it looks forward with enthusiasm. We have tried all sorts of new things, and are eager to try them again in the light of our experiences. As the Centre was formed in the late spring, we started with a series of rambles with Mr. Talbot Leak over the most wonderful rambling country imaginable. The summer over, we had a series of lectures of very high standard from Archdeacon Darbyshire, Rev. Martin Pope, Miss Constance A. Renshaw, Mr. Louis Golding and Mr. Cranmer Byng. One evening was delightfully spent also in the reading of Mr. Byng's play *Salma*. Mr. Cranmer Byng covered some centuries of Chinese poetry, the Archdeacon gave us the seventeenth century, Mr. Pope, Browning, Miss Renshaw, the dead soldier poets, and Mr. Golding, himself.

Our Christmas supper—a costume affair with mummers, carols, old-fashioned doings and whatnot—closed the year very delightfully. We had guests representing the city, the local university and the Press, the secret of whose sustained interest lies in our splendid Press secretary, Mr. Wendlandt.

In 1924 we have gradually developed a highly satisfactory habit of inter-club visits with other Sheffield Societies. This system yielded splendid audiences for our recital of Sheffield poets by Sheffield artists in March, which aroused widespread interest and has borne fruit in our membership ; and for the visit of Mr. Cuming Walters (of *Edwin Drood* fame) a few weeks ago. At this last affair we were visited by the Playgoers, the Shakespeare Society, the Thespians, the University Dramatic Society and many others. Mr. Walters' thesis was that Shakespeare's plays were for the study, not for the stage. Mr. Stembridge, of the *Telegraph*, had visited us a week or so before, and had almost suggested that Bacon wrote the works in question ! This latter was one of our liveliest and wittiest evenings.

Another lively paper was that by Mr. Philip Hall on *Parody*, at an At-Home given by Miss Hawson at her studio, and Miss Hawson herself found leisure in the midst of her manifold productions to give us a paper on *Masefield*. We look back with very great pleasure, too, on the paper on *Coleridge*, by Rev. Alfred Hall.

Future fixtures as follows :—

May 1st. May morning breakfast, 7 a.m., at Ringinglow.

(All readers of the POETRY REVIEW ought to see Ringinglow before they die.)

May 30th. Lecture by Dr. W. H. Hulbert.

Eve of St. John. Garden party *chez* Mrs. Ward. Open-air production of *Midsummer Night's Dream* and folk-dancing.

Summer Rambles. Communicate with Mr. Geo. S. Gordon, 349, Ecclesall Road.

THE BYRON CENTENARY.

The President of the Poetry Society has nominated Mr. Galloway Kyle, Hon. Director of the Society and Editor of the POETRY REVIEW, to represent the Society at the Greek National celebrations of the Byron Centenary in Athens, Missolonghi and Corinth, of which some account will appear in the next issue of the POETRY REVIEW. Mr. Kyle is the guest of the Greek Government and the University of Athens during his sojourn in Greece. The next issue of the POETRY REVIEW will also contain a report of the Poetry Society's celebration of the Centenary.

In connection with the Centenary, attention is drawn to the circular enclosed with this issue, bringing forward a suggestion for the relief of the Christian refugees in Greece. Only private charity can now save the lives of many of the 500,000 refugees who are destitute. The distress is intense, many deaths being caused by exposure alone, and the generous support of our readers is earnestly desired.

KENSINGTON CENTRE.

The last Session was very successful, Mr. F. W. Rawnsley opened with a very interesting address on Shelley. On January 31st, Mr. Owlett spoke provocatively on Modern Poetry, and there was a good discussion afterwards. Mrs. Lambert Lack organised some delightful "Scenes from Shakespeare" on February 14th; they were played in costume and were exceedingly well done; several members of the Centre acted with Mrs. Lambert Lack. Dr. Frederick Boas unfortunately was ill with influenza on the 28th, and as the intimation only came on the 27th, the President had to fill the gap and chose Allan Brockington's *Common Epiphany* to speak on. Mr. Patrick Braybrooke gave an interesting paper on "Chesterton as a Poet," and Miss Roberson, who, in the enforced absence of the President, took the Chair, gave a delightful reading of one of Chesterton's poems. On March 27th, Dr. John Hutton spoke on Francis Thompson with much wit, great sympathy and understanding. His address was greatly appreciated.

May 6th.—"Conversazione." Lyceum Club, 4 o'clock.

May 22nd.—Dr. F. Boas: "The Poetry of the Pre-Raphaelites"; 16, Devonshire Place, W.

June 5th.—Mr. Oscar Gridley: "Rudyard Kipling"; 24, Ladbroke Road, Notting Hill Gate.

June 19th.—Mr. Lewis Hind: "Alice Meynell"; at 4, Phillimore Gardens, W.

July 3rd.—Miss Crosby Heath: "Singing Birds"; at Leighton House.

THE BYRON CENTENARY

THE Byron Centenary has been celebrated on a scale and with an enthusiasm never before accorded such an anniversary. Greece set the example, and was a stimulant to other countries. In Greece the celebrations were national; they absorbed statesmen, the literati and the populace, and caused the suspension of national and private business. Switzerland, with its many Byronic associations and memories, duplicated the Greek commemoration in miniature; Italy, preoccupied with domestic affairs, did public honour on a smaller scale to the memory of one of the splendid triumvirate who found inspiration and consolation in that fair land; France was scarcely vocal, except in London, where her Ambassador spoke eloquently at the Poetry Society's significant meeting, but I saw in Paris more new books evoked by the Centenary than London has produced. If I had not more than sufficient material for the space at my disposal, if I were compiling a record of the world fame of Byron instead of being limited to some short record of the Centenary celebrations, I have at my side a most useful volume printed on April 19th, in which M. Georges Roth has collected the tributes to the genius of Byron paid by eminent Frenchmen, including Victor Hugo, Lamartine, Alfred de Vigny, between 1816 and 1830. I must quote from the letter of the publisher in sending the book as a typical contemporary French contribution to the Centenary messages :—

The whole world will associate itself with England in celebrating the centenary of the author of *Manfred* and of *Childe Harold* [note the two poems specifically mentioned], whose fame equalled that of Goethe before attaining the glory which war and a soldier's death give.

France will not be the last to pay homage to the memory of one of the very first to initiate certain characteristic shades of our modern temperament, to one of the masters of the exotic and cosmopolitan influences of the nineteenth century, to him, perhaps the first of the poets who, faced with the disconcerting spectacle of the human tragi-comedy, unites in the harmonious torrent of his songs Voltaire's irony with the tender pity and powerful love of a generous heart, and the most childlike enthusiasm with the most bitter disenchantment.

Byron is always dear to us, not only because he was one of the most lovable pioneers of Romantism, but also because he defied with the insolent and charming grace of a page-boy the quackeries and hypocrisies of the old order, used his poetic frenzy in the service of our eighteenth century ideas and by the charm of his songs brought to modern man the " message " of the French Revolution.

Quite appropriately, all the world met in London at our Centenary meeting at 139, Piccadilly, to testify to the world fame of Byron. A score of nations were represented at that remarkable gathering, which is reported briefly elsewhere in this issue, and equally appropriately the wreath laying ceremony on April 19th was confined to the Greek community and ourselves.

But while the general public commemoration took place in London and assumed an international character, the particular and national recognition of this notable Centenary was provided by Greece—at Athens and Messilonghi. Representative Englishmen were present on the invitation of the Greek Government, but their participation was secondary, except that they were the vicarious recipients of homage rendered to their famous countryman. We—I write as the delegate nominated on the invitation of the Greek Government to represent the Society—were made to feel that we were the heirs of Byron and as his proxies were the witnesses of honours paid to the undimmed memory of a poet who made a noble dream come true. One is tempted to enter upon a description of Greece and compare the evanescent present with the undying past, but a topographical diary is as much out of our province as any addition to the many voices that have apprized the fame of Byron during recent months. After as hurried a journey across Europe as an arbitrary, monopolistic train-de-luxe, misnamed " express," would allow, our spirits rose and the emotions were profoundly stirred as we ran through Macedonia into the land of gods and heroes and in brilliant spring sunshine skirted Olympus and its attendant gorges, along the sides of which the train appeared to be suspended in mid-air, with a mass of flowering shrubs, arbutus, azaleas, judas-trees, in brilliant profusion below, and snow-capped

ranges above and around—a gorgeous entry to the Attic stage. In further description Byron need not be quoted here. "He sang of all Greece," the Greek Minister reminded us at our London meeting, "of her skies, her seas, her mountains, her promontories, her flowers, her everlasting temples," and even on a Byronic mission we dare not add to the poet's apostrophes. He even expresses for us the emotion felt on coming into actual contact with the land from which we draw the essence of our culture and realise that it is an existing, struggling modern state and not a fabled country of classic lore :

Yet are thy skies as blue, thy crags as wild :
Sweet are thy groves and verdant are thy fields,
Thine olive ripe as when Minerva smiled,
And still his honies wealth Hymettus yields.

Where'er we tread 'tis haunted holy ground ;
No earth of thine is lost in vulgar mould,
But one vast realm of Wonder spreads around,
And all the Muse's tales seem truly told,
Till the sense aches with gazing to behold
The scenes our earliest dreams have dwelt upon
Each hill and dale, each deepening glen and wold
Defies the power which crushed they temples gone
Age shakes Athenæ's tower but spares grey Marathon.

Search Byron, as a centenary exercise, for other fitting lines descriptive of Greece, or Byron and Greece, and Mr. Harold Spender will save you and me this timely and delightful examination. He has collated the poet's writings, in both verse and prose, on the subject, which was closer to the poet's heart than "Calais" to the heart of Queen Mary, in a handsome volume published by Mr. Murray on the Centenary day.

"At last history has decided to accomplish the ideal of a poet." This striking phrase of our Greek Minister epitomises the burden of the commemoration proceedings in Greece when honour was done to the poet who himself translated the fervour of his poetic genius into action and

by words and deeds inspired action in others. "This is the finest tribute that one can pay to a poet"—to further quote M. Caclamanos, who in London so eloquently and nobly summarised all the eloquence of the Centenary, and loftily and concisely justified the celebrations in Greece, London and elsewhere in an address that has been placed on permanent record by being printed in English and Greek and deposited in the Poetry Society's library as a definite memorial of a great occasion which deeply moved the nation for whom His Excellency is the spokesman,—"this is the finest tribute that one can pay to a poet,—to call him the inspirer of great actions, to proclaim him a creator, to give his name its true significance, to recognise in him, as the Greek word 'to make' indicates, the poet, the maker. The maker of a nation, one who was the initiator of a new stream in its history, in whose deep and clear course centuries have dipped with delight—what title could be more striking than this?"

This is the text of the distinguished speeches that characterised the many Centenary functions in Greece, the poet as maker in the wider sense seldom if ever before achieved and acknowledged and a great tribute to the impulsive inspiration of the poet. Byron as liberator naturally predominated over Byron the poet, but Lord Ernle adjusted the balance in his fine moving speech at the unveiling of a Byron statue in the Prater or Champs Elysées of Athens—a picturesque ceremony under a brilliant sky and in the vivid atmosphere symbolical of the intense life of the nation. This address, which we are happy to be able to print because of its reminder that before politics came the poet, was the proper complement of the impressive discourse delivered the previous day in the picturesque aula of the University by Professor Menardos, Rector-elect of the National University, and at one time an Oxford Professor. The reasoned panegyric of the learned orator, himself a poet and critic, was chiefly concerned with Byron's services to Greece,—the theme of other speeches, equally eloquent and comprehensive

but which must be accepted as glosses on the survey by Professor Menardos, which we have the privilege of publishing in this issue as typical of the deep, sincere, yet discriminating homage which characterised the enthusiastic festivities that coincided with a further development of the liberation of Greece, and an anxious steadfast recovery from a great disaster.

The flow of oratory was restrained. Each function had its distinguished and appropriate Greek and British orator, but no supplementary speech-making was indulged in. At the banquet given by the Government the Prime Minister very simply and feelingly welcomed the English visitors and summarised the reasons for the " entente," and Sir Rennell Rodd, a former British Minister in Athens, briefly replied as representative of the English Government. Lord Ernle's Greek colleague was the Minister of Education, and at the civic reception the courtesies of the Mayor were acknowledged by Lord Burnham, who also was the British spokesman at the University, replying in sonorous eloquence to the courtly characterisation of himself and other eminent recipients of honorary degrees by the Dean (Professor Andreadas, a distinguished economist who has relieved the study of British census statistics by writing appreciations of modern poets of Greece), both speakers and the occasion doing honour to the philhellenic tradition established by Byron.

Prof. Andreadas, in mentioning that Byron gave generously to the relief of refugees in Ithaka, referred to the present-day refugee problem, almost overwhelming in its intensity, which Greece has faced with fortitude. Some slight but affecting impression of the calamity endured by this now much reduced State was given by a visit to the new " Byron " suburb for the purpose of participating in the laying of the foundation stone of an orphanage which Mr. Morgenthau, the late American Ambassador at Constantinople, is building. Here we were surrounded by war orphans and refugees from Smyrna who had lost all their possessions in the debacle and who are being enabled to start life afresh in " Byronia." Here as elsewhere the Regent and provisional President of the Republic, Admiral Coundouriotis—a descendant of the President of the Greeks who in 1824 issued a decree calling Byron the father and benefactor of the nation and ordering memorial services to be held in all Greek churches—accompanied the visitors, and with the Prime Minister set an example of high-bred courtesy and simple graciousness that

met the visitors everywhere and flowed spontaneously from all who in any way acted as hosts and cicerones. The Byron settlement, with its many humanitarian activities, which owes so much to the kindly American millionaire and his wife who have devoted themselves to the succour of distressed Greek nationals, and the adjoining soup kitchens, where a thousand pitiable refugee women and children are being fed from funds administered by the most amiable of Scoto-Canadians, inspired a subsequent Mansion House meeting at which Lord Burnham presided fresh from direct contact with benevolent work that deeply impressed his energetic and acute mind.

The national dances and costumes of Greece were brought to the visitors' notice in vivid fashion at a festival in the National Theatre. The classical dances charmed us with the grace of movement exhibited by the Athenian ladies who appeared for our delight, but the greatest enthusiasm was evoked by their representation of modern festal folk dances, in which the heavily embroidered dresses and military helmets of Macedonia vied in attractiveness with the brilliantly dressed Creatan maidens. These joyous performances were the epilogue of a pleasing function to commemorate the "Maid of Athens," on whose erstwhile dwelling a plaque had been placed in the presence of her granddaughter, followed by another festival of music and song on the Acropolis in full moonlight, to which all Athens flocked—an unforgettable spectacle viewed from the front of the Parthenon overlooking Mars Hill and the Piræus.

The three crowded festal days in Athens were the prelude to the culminating events at Messilonghi on the actual Centenary day. On the 18th a large company of us were taken by special train to Corinth—an agreeable journey in comfortable, commodious rolling stock that few Continental railways can equal. At first we ran through gardens and olive groves and by cornfields and vineyards to ancient Megara, and then the train wound a sinuous way alongside the Gulf of Salamis and by the niche high above the famous waters where Xerxes sat in his silver-footed chair, and so to Corinth, now decayed and little but a deathless name. That night we were boarded on a steamer in the Gulf of Corinth, and in the morning found ourselves off Kyroneri, the port of Messilonghi, whither we were taken across the fringe of the famous land of Caledon by a train no fleeter than Atalanta to the low-lying sun-baked delta where Byron passed his last days.

(*To be continued.*)

BYRON AND GREECE*

IF Greece has taken the initiative in celebrating the centenary of a great English poet, it is because Byron died for Greece with as much devotion as was ever shown by the best of the Greeks, who fell ἀμυνόμενοι περὶ πατρης. True, he did not fall on the battlefield. But up to the very last day he longed for the glory of a soldier's death and he breathed his last in the arms of Greece, fondly fancying himself in battle: "Onward, follow me; fear not."

Certainly, of all Byron's passions Greece was both the noblest and the most lasting. To analyse that sentiment, to explain Byron's relations to Greece is not a subject to be treated summarily; yet the duty of doing so devolves above all upon the Greeks, seeing that it is to this sensitiveness of the poet that we owe, in part, our freedom.

We do not, indeed, forget that we owe a similar debt to men from other Western countries, to other Englishmen, to other poets, as well. Shelley was much more enthusiastic over the heroes of our Revolution. Hastings spent more in the cause and fell like a second Cynaegiros, fighting. Φριδερίχος Νόρθιος, as he who was afterwards Lord Guilford used to sign himself, conferred more lasting benefits on Greece, Napier had more appreciation for her people. And yet Byron, of all the Philhellenes, was by far the most popular in Greece and by far the best known outside. Why?

Because Byron's connection with Greece started very early, when he was barely twenty-two years of age, and his poetic inspiration almost sprang from her. It was that passion of his which proved the most powerful stimulant to his genius and triumphed over every disillusionment and every sacrifice. Byron did not, like Shelley, only see the beauties of her he loved within the mirror of his fancy, but on the contrary knew all her degradation, all her misfortune; and it was exactly Greece's sufferings and her misfortunes that kindled his generous heart.

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*A Centenary oration delivered by Prof. Simos Menardos, of the National University of Greece.

It is well known how Lord Byron, when he was just twenty-two, in 1810, went all through Greece, from Tepeleni, where Ali Pasha adroitly flattered him, to Preveza, then passed through Acarnania and, crossing over to Patras, followed the coast as far as Aeglon ; thence he crossed again to Continental Greece, went up to Delphi, admired Parnassos, visited Chaeroneia and, by way of Livadia, came to Thebes, to Plataea. Then by way of Phyle he descended to Athens and—blessed hour !—entered the gates of the city at about half-past eight at night.

After a ten weeks' stay at the house of the widow Macri, he travelled on to Smyrna and Ephesos, Tenedos and the Straits, swam across the Hellespont, wandered over the plain of Troy, reached Constantinople, and saw that most marvellous work of nature or art from the Seven Towers to the head of the Golden Horn, and thence turned back, landed at Kea, crossed over to Attica, and rode to Athens, where he put up at the convent of the Capuchins, started again on his excursions into Attica, to the islands, to Patras, Argos, Tripolitsa ; and there we lose him " among his friends," as he used to say, " of the Morea." " I crossed the Isthmus eight times on my way from Attica to the Morea over the mountains, or in the other direction, when passing from the Gulf of Athens to that of Lepanto. Both the routes are picturesque and beautiful," he says in his notes, untiring, all enthusiasm and joy, he the young lord among the kilted clansmen and the monks, the brigands and the pirates, the giaours and the aghas. What mattered the hardships and the dangers ? He had eyes only for the eternal beauties of Greece.

And that is how there grew up the tenderest feeling that ever bound poet to a land. He used to repeat afterwards that it was an honour only to have visited Greece. But Greece, too, smiled to that insatiable admirer ; she gave him one of the most powerful inspirations that ever stirred mortal heart.

" The air of Greece made me a poet," he used to write, and later in life he confessed to Stanhope : " I never wrote a single decent verse outside Greece." How far was

this true? The passionate Byron of the poems is contradicted by the scoffing Byron of the letters. But one thing is undeniable: on that sensitive nature there impressed themselves indelibly certain monstrous antitheses, which formed the *motif* of the Byronic style—slavery and Greece, the greatness of the ancestors and the pettiness of the descendants, the terrible collapse of so much glory, so much art, so much splendour! To a soul such as that of Byron there spoke with greater eloquence than a Parthenon intact, the ruined, the enslaved, the defaced Parthenon. And the injustice of the mighty stirred his magnificent wrath, the fate of the Greeks his pity, and, finally, the insolence of the foreigner his jibes.

Thus Byron's inspiration and his Philhellenism sprang from one and the same source and took shape in Athens under the Turks. Athens, "the noblest and most unfortunate of cities," was the object of Byron's tenderness and worship, whose recollection was never absent from his mind. His love for her was as great as that of Julian; he sang her as a second Sophocles or Euripides. The description of the natural beauties of Greece flashes brilliantly through the second canto of *Childe Harold*, *The Curse of Minerva*, *The Giaour*, and *The Corsair*, while in the notes he takes up the defence of the Greeks. He is full of indignation against those foreigners who claimed that the Greeks were unworthy of liberty. . . . Yet a greater service rendered by him was the attempt to enlighten his countrymen concerning the intellectual progress made by the Greeks. "Their grammars and lexicons of two, three and four languages are numerous and excellent"; and he praises a pupil of Psalidas, as "better educated than a fellow-commoner of most colleges."

What is yet stranger is that it was amidst the enthusiastic *didaskaloi* and patriots of that period that Byron was initiated into those revolutionary principles which later earned for him the reputation of a "Carbonaro." It was they who circulated Coray's *Buglecall* (1803); it was they who sang Regha's "Forward, ye sons of the Greeks." And before Byron composed the 20 celebrated stanzas of

Childe Harold, he had already translated the "famous Greek war song" of that poet whom Austria and Turkey made away with in the waters of the Danube at Belgrade. Reghas, too, invoked Sparta and Thermopylæ, but that poem is a good example of how a great poetic genius can transform a simple popular melody. In the same way, it was a quatrain of Asclepiades (Pal. Anth. V. 168) which suggested to Byron six magnificent stanzas of *Don Juan* (I, 72-77).

On April 11th, 1811, Lord Byron left Athens for home, carrying with him four thousand verses. One fine morning, as he himself used to say, he woke up to find himself famous; and the next day, as wrote the Duchess of Devonshire, "he made the men jealous of him, the women of each other." He married and, four years later, left England never to return. He settled in Venice and later in Genoa, he overran all Italy and kept startling Europe like a second Alcibiades, far more dangerous, however, than the old one, inasmuch as he was the favourite of the Muses as well. Childe Harold had become Don Juan.

But all these things do not matter to us. Our Byron was always blameless, like his love for the "Maid of Athens." When the Greek Revolution broke out, "the victories of the Greeks"—so Gamba writes—"confirmed his expectations," but for two years he was satisfied to hear of them from afar and rejoice. His friend Shelley, of a more enthusiastic nature, wrote his immortal *Hellas*, but Byron remained silent. Suddenly, in February, 1823, he decided to become a warrior and to set foot on Greece once more.

Many causes contributed to that decision; the tears of the Countess Guiccioli, the indiscreet glances of his fellow-countrymen, the comments with which the whole of Europe pursued his acts, as too much befitting a youth. He was then in his thirty-sixth year—that is, half-way through life—and the sight of his curly hair growing grey filled him with melancholy. Then it was that he began to be overcome by that Byronic feeling of disgust, that aristocratic weariness, that lofty contempt for all he had done, including

his poetry. He used to reflect in anger that Italy in 1820 proved unsuitable soil for his schemes of liberation. And then he began to dream of that other land, the only one, as he said, where he was ever happy. In that Greece of his he felt he had a field for action, he felt that he could convince his friends and, above all, his enemies that he could do something "more serious than verses," could cover himself with glory like Aristides, if not like Themistocles, or, better still, fall in battle like Leonidas.

But resolutions of that sort are much easier to conceive than to realise. Byron, after tearing himself away from Genoa, reached Argostoli on August 3rd, 1823, but there he remained, as is well known, a full month on board the ship and then settled at Metaxata, which he made his headquarters for fresh excursions. The world continued to follow his every action and his enemies wrote: "We hope that Lord Byron's political achievements will suffer the same fate as his literary ones." "This," as Solomos sarcastically remarks, "was meant for irony; if one did not read it in an Austrian newspaper, certainly nobody would understand it."

What is certain is that the poet, as soon as he set foot again on Greek soil, went through a sudden transformation. He was at once faced with the tragic spectacle of the refugees from Chios and realised that the afflicted people, whom he was coming to help, were indeed in earnest; that they were fighting, with their yataghans and long guns, a life-and-death struggle. Shortly after his arrival Marcos Botzaris himself, after writing him his last letter, fell on the field of Carpenissi. Byron was, indeed, fearless but grown wiser. His one thought was how he might be most useful. He saw that what the Greeks wanted was a peacemaker and realised that the war was being waged without mercy. Then he wrote to Hobhouse: "Could I only save a single life, whether Turk or Greek, I should live *mihi carior* and I trust not less to my friends." Here we see all the greatness of his heart! What filled him with enthusiasm was not the battle, it was the sacred idea of the Revolution, it was the *cause*. And he wrote to Napier:

" I like the cause, at least, and I will stick by it while it is not degraded or dishonoured."

Unfortunately the Revolution, towards the end of 1823, had degenerated into the civil war between the two Executives, but never was dishonoured. Byron began his activity as a " Milordos," that is, as purveyor-in-chief. That princely subsidy of four thousand pounds, which he gave while he was still at Cephalonia, enabled the Greek fleet to take to sea and force the Turks to raise the blockade of western Greece, thus enabling Alexander Mavrocordatos to land again at Messolonghi, which was already threatened.

But at the same time Byron's moral influence began to make itself felt. That remarkable letter which he addressed to the Government on November 30th, 1823, retains its full value. How well he had gauged the Greek's sense of pride ! But, above all, worthy of praise is the well known attitude which the poet maintained to the very end in face of all the invitations which were showered on him from every quarter. He realised that everybody aspired to be recognised as the Official Government and his first condition was reconciliation. In this way his popularity daily increased and reached its zenith, when finally, throwing aside his doubts, he arrived at Messolonghi.

From that historic morning of January 5th, 1824, when Byron, after a five days' storm, wearing a scarlet uniform, landed at Messolonghi in the midst of salutes from the guns of the fleet and the forts one can say that he overshadowed all the other leaders of the Revolution.

His fame had preceded him. But what did the people of Messolonghi see in that handsome face ? Was it the poet ? Certainly not. The general ? Neither. The provider of funds ? Not only that. Those harassed beings saw in him an angel of Providence, proving, as it were, that Providence existed—a second Gabriel bringing to Greece the glad message of redemption, order, freedom.

The sensitive poet realised that never before had his face been encircled with such a halo, that nowhere else had he been raised so high, and his pride bade him not to fall. Did Byron succeed in this ? Is it certain that Byron failed

to achieve anything? that at Messolonghi he was surrounded by treason, espionage and intrigue, that he lost his health, his fame, his honour?

Fortunately, no! That the motley crowd of foreign officers, and even the British gunners whom he had engaged, proved useless is certain. That his band of 600 Suliotes were always quarrelling and would not obey is still more certain. But Byron knew that those unruly mercenaries, always complaining and giving trouble, did not represent—far from it—the whole Greek people, not even the people of Messolonghi. The Suliotes are still as distinct from the people of Messolonghi as the Scotch are from the English. Byron, when he saw that only the Botsaris remained faithful to him, discharged the Suliotes and engaged other soldiers. Of course, all these things made him angry and were an almost daily source of annoyance to him. But in this lay the greatness of his heart, that he always ended by a jest and quickly recovered from his angers, that he overlooked the disappointments and saw only the cause. Finally he also had some rewards. How often, when galloping past his (more or less) regular army, when watching his gunners at practice, or when simply escorted, he and his friends, by his gold-bedecked guard of Suliotes, how often did he not feel the pride of the commander, the only form of pleasure he had not yet tasted! Byron, as Tricoupis well put it, was not vainglorious (*kenodoxos*) but was ambitious (*philodoxos*), and when Mavrocordatos gave him the title of Commander-in-chief, the Fanariote had rightly judged his man.

Further, Byron saw that, thanks to his subsidies, Messolonghi, under Mavrocordatos's administration—perhaps the best thing in that stateman's record—had become the best governed, perhaps the only well governed city in Greece. Gamba testifies to the fact that even the elections were held with great order. Progress was made with the technical fortification of the town. There were schools and doctors. Finally, there was a newspaper published—later there were two, diminutive sheets, it is true, but sufficient to give publicity to his Lordship's thought and acts.

The letters and resolutions which he received from all sides prove how successful he was in his main object. That is, he very soon made all the Greeks understand that his Lordship was above parties, that he was the peacemaker, the benefactor of the Fatherland. How many far more experienced statesmen—Capodistrias, for instance—failed in this! And how much more practical he was than the rest in pointing out Greece's real needs, how much more sensible than Stanhope when talking of the liberty of the Press, how much wiser than his doctors in refusing to be bled.

The offer which was made him by the Government on March 18th—one month before his death—of the governorship of Continental Greece was no mere act of flattery. It was at the demand of the people, because the whole people had conceived "the most brilliant hopes which" (as Tricoupis puts it) "became very near realisation."

In one thing Byron was not successful, but that was beyond the powers of any human being. His health failed him. What exactly was the nature of the various illnesses to which the *Greek Chronicle* and even his doctors refer, no one can say; excessive fatigue affected his nerves, his isolation oppressed him, the constant rains increased his moodiness. But what caused his undoing was his insistence to harden himself against the rains and his resolve not to abandon Messolonghi for the sake of his health. He looked upon this as desertion. . . .

Few mortals, perhaps only Alexander, died such a death. I know of no poet. Byron was mourned in Greece like Adonis. But his death created a tremendous and far-reaching impression. It appeared, as Edward Bulwer said, "as something of the unnatural, of the impossible." It is admitted that it stirred the world more deeply than the death of any contemporary—including Napoleon. What was it that exalted the sorely tried pilgrim so high? The cause. The sacred object of his expedition. If after his first pilgrimage Greece gave him back to England a great poet, the second time she gave him back as something higher, a saint.

And the great dead suddenly began to work his miracles for her. Such is the divine privilege of poets and martyrs! The former Byronism of France, Italy, Germany, Russia took on a far more beautiful form. Goethe sang his apotheosis as Euphorion, and the other poets, great or small, who mourned the sleeping leader in every tongue, mingled in their verses three words as symbols of a sort of new faith—Philhellenism—Byron, Greece and Liberty.

Very soon Greece gave a proof of how deserving she was of such a sympathy. Her struggle became more unequal and more dramatic. Egypt came to the rescue of exhausted Turkey with her fleets and her armies. Miaoulis the Hydriote Themistocles, with the ships of the three small islands, scattered, near Samos, the united fleets of Chosrev and Ibrahim, but, six months later, the Egyptian Attila landed at Methone, layed waste the Peloponnese, and stopped before Messolonghi.

The eyes of the world were now turned towards the town which the poet had sanctified, where a fort and a bastion bore his name. Turks, Egyptians and Frankish renegades hemmed in the town, but the besiegers, in Ibrahim's own words, "melted away like snow." "The conduct of the defenders of Messolonghi," says Finlay, "will awaken the sympathies of freemen in every country as long as Grecian history endures." And when, after one year's resistance, the surviving men, with their women and children armed in their midst—all of them reduced by hunger to mere spectres—sallied forth to break through the enemy's lines, while the old men and the wounded who had remained behind blew themselves into the air, that final sacrifice was truly a reply to the exhortations of the poet, was a sublime requiem to his illustrious memory!

Messolonghi and Byron, from that moment, became the watchwords of the Philhellenes throughout the world. When the news of the fall of the martyred town reached Paris, the students at night in wild enthusiasm went to the palace and summoned to the balcony the warm-hearted Charles X; the ideas of Philhellenism, which had already

gained the peoples, gained the rulers. It was Byron's ideas, the poet's indignation, that were expressed in the broadsides of Navarino.

What object did his death serve? To exalt all that is noble in man's nature! Alas! How badly humanity needs such leaders! We had the proof thereof, barely two years ago, in Smyrna's harbour. There were repeated scenes more terrible than those of Pylos. Women and children, pursued with fire and sword by the same barbarous foe, threw themselves into the sea seeking to save their lives. The fleets of nearly the very same allies, the allies who had armed the Christians against the Turks, were there. But their guns were silent. Why? Because, after twenty millions of men had been sacrificed during the war, instead of the Byronian ideals, Europe was suddenly seized by the "sacred egoism" and the ideas of Monsieur Roque prevailed.

We feel—and we wish it to be felt—that, in spite of obstacles and faults committed, we are still carrying on a contest which has lasted three thousand years and to-day attains the limits of self-sacrifice. This small nation, whether in victory or in defeat, holds high, over the Hellenic lands, a dripping standard, beneath which a Byron fell prostrate. And that is why, in the midst of so many difficulties, we have not hesitated to summon to this city—whose magic name "must o'er all prevail"—the natural and spiritual heirs of Byron, in order that we may be judged in the same spirit of fairness, in order that we—Britons and Hellenes—may be more closely brought together in his name.

SIMOS MENARDOS.
(Translated by A. A. P.)

ON PREPARING TO WRITE A SPRING POEM

I DIP in the dew to its jeweled heart
The tip of a wild bird's wing . . .
Good Jonquil, lend me the golden word!
I would write what I think of Spring.

HILTON R. GREER.

THE COSMOPOLITAN POET*

AT Missolonghi, a century ago, Byron died for the Liberation of Greece. He was only 36 years old; he was weary, and sometimes despondent in mind. How great must have been the temptation to return to the island which for him meant health, safety, friends. But true to the cause of Greece, true to his own honour, he stayed—and died. Surely, whatever may have been his faults, his supreme self-sacrifice has been the ransom of his soul.

The romance of Byron's life and death has helped to keep his memory fresh. But it is as a poet that he lives. He wrote with careless ease, as it were in his shirt sleeves, and not in singing robes. Yet his work throbs with passion; it quivers with vitality.

So it is that he gave the old world another heart and a new pulse. He stirred the emotions of two continents. He made the people feel and poetry popular.

On the Continent he has always been the outstanding figure in English literature. It is not difficult to find some of the reasons. He is the most cosmopolitan of our national poets. He belongs to a larger world than that which is bounded by our sea-girt shores.

Apart from his birth, he belongs to Europe as much as to Great Britain, to London less than to Athens.

On the Continent he lived the greater part of his mature years. On the Continent was written all his immortal poetry. On the Continent—in Belgium, in Switzerland, in Italy and, above all, in Greece—hundreds of places are haunted by his potent personality. And the note of his poetry which to-day is most distinct is the wide cosmopolitan note of humanity. The beauty and splendour of the world, its thought, its arts, its heroism, are the common heritage of the whole human race. It follows, as a necessary consequence, that all the wrongs, all the sufferings, all the oppressions of individual nations are our common burden, our common responsibility.

That is the idea which in his early manhood thrilled

* Address by Lord Ernle, the latest Editor of Byron, at the unveiling of the Byron Monument in the Zappeion at Athens, April 17, 1924.

Byron as, here in Athens, he realised to the full how Greece has made the whole world her debtor by her entrancing beauty, by her divine art, her glorious literature, her golden book of heroic deeds. To that idea he was faithful throughout his career. It is the idea which Byron so often sang—it is the idea for which he gave his life.

As a gallant soldier of humanity, Byron still appeals to the world. In his own day, and on the Continent more continuously than in England, he was a strenuous fighter for liberty—for political liberty, of conscience, of action.

After the fall of Napoleon a heavy atmosphere of repression stifled the peoples who were struggling for light and air, and freedom. It was then that Byron made himself the voice of an embittered, disappointed and disillusioned Europe.

Aristocrat though he was to the finger tips, he popularised democratic sentiments. He poured out in his poetry all his detestation of war, his contempt for the political, social and moral codes of the governing classes. He became an emancipation force of real historical importance.

No doubt his poetry was deeply charged with his own personal feelings. He had left England, at war with his world, at odds with the ruling society in his own country. An outcast and exile he was—like Continental Europe, embittered, disappointed, disillusioned. In expressing his own feelings he was thus also expressing those of his own times and of many generations that followed. So it is that his accent of revolt mingling with that of his own private grievances throbs with intensity of feeling and pulsates with passionate sincerity. The critic and poet whom Lord Burnham quoted said of him that he displayed to the world the pageant of his bleeding heart. It is true. But it is only half the truth and it misses the secret of his strength. The heart was not only his own. It was also the bleeding heart of Europe.

To have quickened the pulse of two Continents, to have lived a knight-errant of humanity and a soldier of liberty, to have died in a noble cause, these are Byron's imperishable glories.

His body was buried, not in Greece where he died, but in an obscure country village in England. No monument in Westminster Abbey commemorates his name. It matters nothing. The tomb of Byron—I use the phrase of your illustrious countryman Pericles—the tomb of Byron is the world.

THE GREEK ODE

An eloquent Byron Centenary Ode was written by Mr. Costis Palamas, who has an international reputation. To his poems, which have been published in English by the Harvard Press, we hope to have an opportunity of referring at a later date. From a more than usually felicitous translation of the Greek original of *Byron*, which is in rhyming decapentasyllabics, we quote the following stanzas :

A hundred years have passed : thou hast not passed !
The golden eagle's cry still tells of thee,
The lilies' whispers, and the thrones and shrines
In the Muses' temples, and the memory
Of Hellas' sons.

I lived a child where thou didst close thine eyes,
And still remember folks from other lands
Come, reverent pilgrims, to the stone that gave
Rest to thy limbs, and to the earth thy feet
Once trod : now sacred stone and holy ground.

And with mine eyes I saw thy humble boatman
O Lara, when the West Wind's kiss far-spread
A silent yearning o'er the wide lagoon.
He, Lara, would have cleared, could'st thou have seen,
The cloud-bedarkened heaven of thy thoughts.

At thy name youths fell wondering, and the eyes
Of elders lightened, as they talked, with joy ;
There too, I kissed a passing lady's hand,
Thy maid of Athens :—*Ζωή μου σᾶς ἀγαπῶ.*

And in those days, the land not yet unweaned
From Arab tyranny, at thy name's sound
Sprang up in brightness a true April's joy,

And a strange love gave new life to dead things,—
Lake waters, and the castle's ruined walls.

* * * *

But see, they come who trim the bitter quill,
Malignant tongues and crawling jealousy:
They cannot cast thee from the pedestal
Whereon thou reignest o'er our reverent hearts.

They call thee torch that burnest to extinction,
And smoke far-scattered on the trembling air,
A meteor falling through the night, the ruin
Of a swift-passing dream.
But heed them not; for in our eyes thou art
Of Night the Star, yea, and the Daystar too.

* * * *

Archilochus' bitterness is thine, thine too
The flame of Sappho, and of Albion
The Shakespearean strain.
A stormy Muse hath suckled thee, who cam'st,
God-sent to us, an amorous Tyrtaeus.

Wayward Don Juan, Giaour guilty-moaning,
In war thou art our trumpet and the soul
Of the deep cannon's roar.
And Missolonghi, heart of Greece, has found
Her slave in the unconquered King of Song.

Twas not the blind contingency of Fate,
The ebb and flow of an uncertain sea,
That threw thee on our shores: a higher grace
Bore thee triumphant on outspreading wings
To great, unhoped achievement.

Not with thy lovely petulance of song
Cam'st thou alone, but with the sacrifice
Of thy life's blood at freedom's altar; thou
In life a Dionysos, but in death
Messiah.

A hundred years have passed: thou hast not passed,
Still liv'st thou where the eagle spreads his wings,
Where fragrant lilies blow: deep in the love,
The poesy, the thought, the soul, the passions.
The glories of the Greeks.

CHILDHOOD AND MODERN VERSE*

MODERN verse is not often sincere in respect of childhood. This may be due to a difficulty of adjustment. It is not easy to maintain a balance between natural and æsthetic feeling, poetical expression and psychology. Yet all these factors are necessary in due proportion for the best work. The best work must be as true to its subject as it is to its technique, and it is here that much of our poetry fails. Its faults are surprisingly obvious. It has not advanced with the times. Patronage and sentimentality are still dominant notes. Conventional ideas are clothed becomingly, or sometimes remarkably cheaply in commonplace verse. That pure sincerity of feeling tone which is more necessary to poetry than anything else has been lost.

As comparatively little verse has been written on childhood we may consider a few of the works of our living poets as more or less representative of what has been done.

Edmund Gosse's *To Teresa* is typical of the kind of sentiment which contemporary culture thinks it proper to display towards a young child. It shall be quoted in full :—

> Dear child of mine, the wealth of whose warm hair
> Hangs like ripe clusters of the apricot,
> Thy blue eyes gazing, comprehend me not,
> But love me, and for love alone I care ;
> Thou listenest with a shy and serious air,
> Like some Sabrina from her weedy grot
> Out peeping coyly when the noon is hot
> To watch some shepherd piping unaware.
> 'Twas not for thee I sang, dear child ; and yet
> Would that my songs could reach such ears as thine,
> Pierce to young hearts unsullied by the fret
> Of years in their white innocence divine ;
> Crowned with a wreath of buds still dewy wet,
> O what a fragrant coronal were mine !

This sonnet shows great technical merits. It is a very good imitation of Keats, but it is so far from being Keats

* Reference is here made, with one exception, to the work of living poets only, and the article is supplementary to Mrs. Alston's "Children and Poetry" articles (1919), *The Child in Verse*, by Mr. L. S. Wood (1922), and Mrs. Winder's *Poetry for Children* (Jan. 1924).

that we experience considerable irritation. The theme is hackneyed and the spring of feeling artificial and forced. One may also catch the note of condescension undisguised by admiration, which is always repugnant to genuine lovers of children.

Again, in James Rhoades's *To Two in India* ("Of Janet aged five") there is the same tone of patronage expressed in pretty sentimental verse of much inferior technique :—

To-day I saw your little Jan,
  You two in India far away,
A dainty sylph that laughed and ran
  Upon the summer lawns at play :
Dark-eyed with elfin locks of gold,
  A medley quaint of grave and gay,
Of coy and forward, young and old—
  I saw your little Jan to-day.

She paused amidst her paradise
  A lofty scorn was in her ken,
Half scanning with reluctant eyes
  The monster, me. A sprite, a wren,
The shy beginnings of a girl,
  A saucy nymph, a wayward fay,
A dewdrop prisoned in a pearl—
  I saw your little Jan to-day.

Anon to battledore she sped,
  Or turned with flying puss to fly,
Or seized the terrier by the head
  Unconscious of her cruelty.
Her pout is an incarnate kiss,
  She smiles, a sunbeam strikes the may !
Her whim is law : you'll know by this
  I saw your little Jan to-day.

Patronage of this kind is probably unconscious in the writer, but it is none the less there, and none the less unpleasing to the reader. In both these poems the personality of the writers is too much to the fore. The children are simply materials for the exercise of their cleverness. The last criticism may even be made of W. H. Davies's *Child Lovers* in its charming ballad rhythm and

delicate expressive language. It is like a bit of decorative painting or embroidery rich in old gold, but when all is said the theme is an affected pose. It ends with the proposal :—

> As they went home that little boy began
> " Love me and, when I'm a big sailor-man,
> I'll bring you home more coral, silk and gold,
> Than twenty-five four-funnelled ships could hold.
>
> And fifty coffins carried to their grave
> Will not have half the lilies you shall have :
> Now say at once that you will be my love—
> And have a pearl ten stallions could not move."

Delightful as this is, it does not give us the real children that we want. It merely throws us back on the worn-out phrase, " Art for art's sake," which, when one comes to think of it, has very little meaning at all.

James Rhoades has achieved something much pleasanter than *To Two in India* in *A Children's Song*, but it is not at all true to the inner life of childhood, which is capable of troubles just as real, if less sensational than those of adult persons. Yet the poet must needs serve out the conventional nonsense about childhood's happy days in fullest measure.

> Every day from morn till night
> Love and laughter and heart's delight
> Every night from eve to morn
> Dewy dreams by the angels borne.

Even a brief acquaintance with children shows how inadequate such a picture is. Yet there are fragments in the song which are very refreshing. One cannot help quoting the second verse as a message from fairies to children—and others.

> Nothing is real that brings annoy
> Earth brims over with unseen joy
> Lonely wanderer, shut your eyes,
> Golden palaces gleam and rise,
> Golden lovers appear to woo ;
> Only believe and it all comes true ;
> This is the spell the Wee Folk weave
> Round the believers in make believe.

Unfortunately it is spoilt by a dreadful refrain :—

List to the lilt of the children's song
Never a thought or fear of wrong
Little tongues utter it
Little hearts flutter it
Flutter and utter it all day long.

The Meeting, by Katharine Tynan Hinkson, is another sentimental jingling piece of verse :—

As I went up and he came down, my little
six-year boy
Upon the stairs we met and kissed, I and
my tender Joy.
Oh ! fond and true, as lovers do, we kissed
and clasped and parted ;
And I went up and he went down refreshed
and happy-hearted.

. . . . .

What need was there for any words, his face
against my face ?

The author seems to find need for words, however, for there are two more verses in the same strain. The whole is spoilt by a surfeit of emotion which can hardly be expressed in language without gush. As it is, it might be Florence Barclay bursting into song. The same may be said of *The Petals*, by Helen Parry Eden—the title refers to the child's garments dropped on the floor when she goes to bed—also of *Dedication*, by Madeleine Nightingale, with its stupid reiteration " Baby o' mine, Baby o' mine " in the second line of each verse. *The Blue of Heaven*, by Henry Allsopp, is a sentimental tale of infant piety. It describes the poet wandering in a wood with a little girl who asks him where Heaven is. He replies with true originality that it is in the sky.

" Ah, yes, the sky is blue," she said,
" And looks so still and pure ;
And see ! this violet is blue
It came from Heaven for sure."

I answered, " Yes, it came from Heaven,"
And tenderly she knelt

To kiss the floweret's lips that clung
To hers as though they felt.

She then discovers other bits of Heaven on earth, including her own eyes and his.

" And yours are blue," she softly said,
" So blue ; and I am glad."
But I could only kiss her lips
And hide that I was sad.

Robert Bridges' *On a Dead Child* is another unhappy effort, with its long, awkward lines and sentimental moralisings :—

Perfect little body without fault or stain on thee
With promise of strength and manhood full and fair
Though cold and stark and bare
The bloom and charm of life doth awhile remain on thee.

Thy mother's treasure wert thou—alas ! no longer
To visit her heart with wondrous joy ; to be
Thy father's pride—ah, he
Must gather his faith together, and his strength make stronger.

And so it goes on, something between a sermon and a dirge.

All this is disappointing. It is sentimental, patronising, and " pious," and a great opportunity is lost. It is very unlucky that it is so, but the difficulty of adjustment between the different phases of the subject and its technique is continually shown. It is probably due to these reasons :—

Children appeal very strongly to our emotions, so we sentimentalise about them. They are inferior to us in certain respects, so we patronise them. We look down on them, not contemptuously, but still we do look down on them because they are smaller and weaker than ourselves and their reasoning power is not so much developed. We also consider ourselves the proper persons to " improve " them, which is seldom the case. Our first business, according to the New Testament, is not to " improve " them but to " become as " them. They, not we, are to be the examples. We do not know, perhaps we cannot know, all that this means, but we should know enough to realise that the " improving " attitude as adopted by the average adult

towards a child is a form of silly and harmful hypocrisy. Children invariably see through it and their trust is undermined in those who might have been their helpers and friends.

We find this form of stupidity specially prevalent in the conventionally minded well-to-do classes, but surely we are justified in looking for something different from the poets of our day. Poets are akin to prophets and other leaders of the people. They speak when we are dumb and see where we are blind. It is to them that we turn for a clear expression of ideas and feelings which are often in our minds but too confused or chaotic for utterance. It is disappointing when they fail us, yet there has never been an age when no one has been able to express the truth in such a manner as to convince his generation. Just a few of our poets have understood and entered into the meaning of childhood. It is implicit in their verse. We feel it at once. Without a trace of patronage, sentimentality, or self-conceit they give us true ideas and glimpses of children as they are. We read them with delight. Perhaps they are not always the best art, but they are sincere. They disclose that strange, intuitive understanding which some few persons have for children. It is an amazing thing, and it has no part or lot with the " sweet poetry about children " with which our anthologies are chiefly supplied.

Take Edward Carpenter's *The Babe* in its wonderful simplicity and complexity ; its frenzy of passion, the lull of many months :—

> And then the Babe :
> A tiny perfect sea shell on the shore
> By the waves gently laid (the awful waves !)—
> By trembling hands received—a folded message—
> A babe yet slumbering with a ripple on its face
> Remindful of the ocean.
>
> And two twined forms that overbend it smiling
> And wonder to what land Love must have journeyed
> Who brought this back, this word of sweetest meaning :
> *Two lives made one, and visible as one.*
> And herein all Creation.

It is difficult to imagine anything more awe-inspiring than this, yet *The Reason*, by Marion St. John Adcock, simply voiced in the language of a child, shows such remarkable insight that it cannot be passed over :—

When I was naughty an' sent up to bed,
And wouldn't go up—I was growing, I said,
Too *big* to be sent—Mother jus' shook her head ;
It's cur'ous she didn't believe that I was
And didn't do like what I thought she would 'cos
She sent me upstairs to bed.

When I was naughty and sent up to bed
And somehow I cried on the stairway, and said
I was only jus' *little*, then Mother, instead,
Came suddenly to me with arms open wide ;
Her eyes were all shiny ; " Jus' little," she cried,
An' carried me down from bed.

Here we have the most usual attitude of a mother to her child—her love of his littleness, and weakness, because it emphasizes his need of her, and her resentment of his dawning independence, because it puts her in the background and fails to emphasise the nature of their relationship. It is a painfully complete picture, while in the opening verses of Geoffrey Winthrop Young's *Jenny* we have a lovely little unfinished sketch as fresh and natural as one could wish. Here it is, just to enjoy :—

There are some children in the field at play
Laughing delightfully ;
I cannot hear a word of what they say :
Just a clean noise of youth, filling the ear
And brimming over on the heart, wind-clear . . .

The children have stopped playing : three or four
Are scampering home this way
Behind the hedge. Just what they seem, no more :
Flicker of brown feet to the finch's song,
In the green Maylight when the days grow long.

Best of all is Padraic Colum's Irish cradle song. In a few brief words he paints a picture as appealing as anything in modern verse. It is purely Celtic, inwardly passionate, outwardly dreamy and still ; so simple in its

faith, so friendly in its welcome, that it touches the heart as truly as Carpenter's exquisite language of love. Here is a very humble home. One can almost smell the peat burning and hear the voice of the peasant mother trailing away on the damp night air :—

O men from the fields
  Come gently within
Tread softly, softly
  O ! men coming in.

Mavourneen is going
  From me and from you,
Where Mary will fold him
  With mantle of blue !

From reek of the smoke
  And cold of the floor,
And the peering of things
  Across the half-door.

O, men from the fields,
  Soft, softly come through,
Mary puts round him
  Her mantle of blue.

J. NANKIVELL.

[This is a children's age, and we think the young people have received better treatment in poetry than the older writers here cited have meted out to them, deserving Miss Nankivell's strictures. We would like to hear from readers of lesser known poems that fill our contributor's requirements. The subject is fascinating.—Ed.]

THE POETRY OF JAMES RHOADES

Since writing the above, I have been advised of the death of James Rhoades, to whom more than a cursory reference should be made in The Poetry Review. He was scholar, teacher, philosopher and poet—a man of solid qualities, undeniably great. Nowadays, it is perhaps natural that he is not widely read, for in many respects he belonged essen-

tially to the Victorian age. But it is noteworthy that he never received the meed of recognition and honour which was fully his due. The impression one gets on reading his works is that of a man who shrank from contact with the world, of one in whom the commercially valuable quality of " push " was entirely lacking. His work also is not of a type to compel the general attention. It is too shyly intimate, too subjective to make a wide appeal. It is true that we find in him a sensitive lover of nature, but he is much more a poet of the soul. We feel this, especially, perhaps, in his beautiful *Out of the Silence*, in which he expresses the doctrine of the indwelling Spirit in man :

> " I am thy Dawn in darkness to release :
> I am thy Deep wherein thy sorrows cease :
> Be still ! Be still ! and know that I am God :
> Acquaint thyself with me, and be at peace ! "

But in most of the nature lyrics we find the same mystical element. Even the rose-tree thorn has its inspired message. It is not a nature sermon, it is the spontaneous outpouring of one to whom faith and hope were far more real than pain.

> Cruel the rose-tree thorn !
> Who grasps will rue it :
> But have ye seen at morn
> The sun shine through it ?
>
> Then, though the fell point feign
> With hate to hide it,
> Tender the warm heart-stain
> That glows inside it.
>
> Who 'mid the thorns of life
> To life's sun turneth,
> Hid in the heart of strife
> Love's hue discerneth :
>
> Happy, though fate-accurst,
> Who so can find it—
> See through the sad world's worst
> God's best behind it.

A SURVEY OF AMERICAN POETRY

First Survey—The Internationalism of American Poetry. Second Survey—The Ultimate West in Poetry. Third Survey—The Bards of the South and South-West. Fourth Survey—Voices from the Great Inland States—I. Fifth Survey—Illinois (Continued).

VOICES FROM THE GREAT INLAND STATES: II—OHIO.

THE State of Ohio has done much to help in raising the " House Beautiful " of Letters and Art in America. It is said " where the Greek goes, there is Hellas." It is true of the State of Ohio, known as the Buckeye State ; of its citizens is said, " Once a Buckeye always a Buckeye."

Ohio has for a long period also led the world as a centre of the school book industry ; this is also true of books on law.

The City of Cincinnati holds the lead in belles-lettres, with Cleveland next, Columbus third, Chillicothe, Oberlin, Toledo and Springfield following.

The oldest burg of the State, the dignified little city of Marietta, may boast at least 70 different books by native authors (published). Almost every village has its library. Chillicothe was the old capitol.

The founders of Ohio did not fail to bring their books with them when they moved there. The State claims many distinguished writers and journalists and many men of wide influence in world affairs—presidents and statesmen.

The great anti-slavery story *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was conceived in Cincinnati. The novelist William Dean Howells is from Ohio (1837–) ; the noted satirist, Ambrose Bierce, included in " The Ultimate West," was born in Ohio (1842–) ; " the beloved Susan Coolidge " (Sarah Chauncey Woolsey, 1845) is also of Ohio. Miss Woolsey now lives in Cleveland and ranks high as a poet. Mark Sibley Severance (1846, Cleveland) wrote the popular *Tom Brown at Oxford*, and many names must be included in any comprehensive list of Ohio's poets that must be omitted because

of lack of space, but we must not pass by without mention the two gifted Cary sisters.

In the opinion of one authority Coates Kinney holds the primacy among Ohio poets, and there is John James Piatt and Sarah Morgan Piatt and Edith Thomas, Kate Brownlee Sherwood, Alice Williams Brotherton and Wm. Norman Guthrie. William Henry Venable, the writer of *Ohio Literary Men and Women*, is the author of inspiring poetry. From a volume of his called *June on the Miami* (1872, Carroll and Co., Cincinnati) I will quote from his *Vision of Science* :—

Beneath the stars, upon a summer night,
I saw a vision fairer than the stars :
A shape descended from the middle sky,
In vesture pure, of light ineffable,
With wings that winnowed music from the air
And crown whose glorious spangles shone so far
They lit the darkness of remotest space.
" What shape art thou ? " I cried and stood apart
In fearful gladness, and admiring awe.
" Fear not ! " the shining visitant replied,
" I bring thee cause of joy and not of fear,
I am the daughter of eternal God,
And Science is my name."

* * *

" I war with Darkness, and I fight with Lies—
I fear the slave that Ignorance enthralls,
I ferret hoar Delusion from his cave,
I lift the veil from Superstition's eyes.

* * *

" and I reveal
The faculties and functions of the mind.

* * *

" I but prepare the world for larger faith,
The doubt I plant stakes up the vine belief,
And Christ sits firmer on His kingdom's throne."

* * *

Edith Matilda Thomas has won for herself the title of Ohio's dean of poetry by her production of hundreds of good poems, extending over a period of forty years, published in newspapers, magazines and books, and her versatile

pen is producing sharply etched poetic interpretations of living things and events as she is nearing her seventieth year! Born at Chatham, Ohio, in 1855, Miss Thomas has been claimed by New York since 1888. Her first book, *A New Year's Masque and Other Poems*, was published in 1885. Her next book was prose, then followed *Lyrics and Sonnets*, 1887; *The Inverted Torch*, 1890; *Fair Shadow Land*, 1893; *In Sunshine Land*, 1895; *In the Young World*, 1895; *The Winter Swallow and other Verse*, 1896; *The Dancers*, 1903; *Cassia and Other Verse*, 1905; *The Children of Christmas*, 1908; *The Guest at the Gate*, 1909; *The White Messenger*, 1915; *The Flower from the Ashes*, 1915; and since then hundreds of poems from her ready pen have appeared in *The New York Times* and leading periodicals.

Miss Thomas's poetry has delighted so many through the years, it is difficult to make a selection from her many books. Her *Frost To-Night* is a favourite. to be found in all anthologies of American poetry :—

Apple-green west and anchorage bar,
And the crystal eye of a lone, one star . . .
And " Child, take the shears and cut what you will,
Frost to-night so clear and dead-still."

* * *

In my garden of Life with its all-late flowers
I heed a Voice in the shrinking hours :
" Frost to-night—so clear and dead-still. . ."
Half sad, half proud, my arms I fill.

Quoting from Miss Thomas's *Lyrics and Sonnets* (Houghton Mifflin and Co., 1900) :—

THE PASSING OF THE LETTERS.

The mail from the east and the mail from the west
A thunder of wheels—a rushing blast !
The drowsy travellers never guessed
What voices arose as the two trains passed.

" Tell him you met me, tell him I fly ! "
" That will I ! Tell her I stay not nor rest ! "
Thus greeted Love's messengers speeding by,
One from the east and one from the west.

WINTER LEAFAGE.

Each year I mark one lone outstanding tree,
Clad in its robings of the summer past,
Dry, wan and shivering in the wintry blast.
It will not pay the season's rightful fee,—
It will not set its frost-burnt leafage free.
But like some palsied miser all aghast,
Who hoards his sordid treasure to the last,
It sighs, it moans, it sings in eldritch glee:
A foolish tree to dote on summers gone;
A faithless tree, that never feels how spring
Creeps up the world to make a leafy dawn
And recompense for all despoilment bring!
Oh let me not, hey day and youth withdrawn,
With failing hands to their vain semblance cling!

MIGRATION.

The cagèd bird that all the autumn day
In quiet dwells when falls the autumn eve
Seeks how its liberty it may achieve,
Beats at the wires and its poor wings doth fray:
For now desire for migrant change holds sway;
This summer-vacant land it longs to leave,
While its free peers on tireless pinions cleave
The haunted twilight, spreading south their way.
Not otherwise than as the prisoned bird,
We here dwell careless of our captive state,
Until light dwindles, and the year grows late,
And answering note to note no more is heard;
Then our loved fellows flown the soul is stirred
To follow them where summer has no date.

From *The White Message* (1915, Richard G. Badger, Boston) I will quote a few of the very forceful lines in the poem called *To a Great People Deceived*:—

Why are ye closed as in enchanted walls—
As past a grim stockade to heaven reared,
Ye people that were once so near our hearts—

* * *

How have ye changed! And wherefore are ye changed?

* * *

Can we not reach you?

* * *

Why made ye war?

In this same volume there is a powerful arraignment of War called *The Wastefulness of War*, in which the following lines occur :—

> " O World grown old conserving all thou hast :
> Thou wastest naught beside,—wilt thou waste men ? "

And from the collection called *Cassia* the following lines are from a sonnet called *Memory and the Full Moon*, beginning :—

> O Nights of silver memory—O Nights !
>
> * * *
>
> Say, didst thou not those love-lit souls absorb
> Wherefore thy splendour aches against mine eyes ?
> O Nights of silver memory—O Nights !

From *Friends in Grey :—*

> Lo, I have grown so grey with time
> I make me friends with all things grey
> With silvery mists that rise and climb
> Upon the footfalls of the day.
>
> * * *

The now famous Paul Lawrence Dunbar, the negro poet (1872–1906), was born in Ohio, and in the preface written by Wm. Dean Howells for his *Lyrics of Lowly Life* (Dodd Mead, 1897) may be found the following interesting information : " There was no admixture in the blood of Dunbar. His father escaped slavery in Kentucky to freedom in Canada, while there was still no hope of freedom otherwise. His mother was freed by the events of the Civil War. Their son was born in Dayton, Ohio. The father was a plasterer, he loved to read, and the boy's mother, as we so often learn in analysing the elements that go to make a poet, shared her son's passion for literature, especially poetry." Dumas and Pushkin, Mr. Howells points out, were both mulattoes, but Dunbar was a pure negro.

Dunbar's humorous note is much enjoyed, but also

beautiful are some of his serious poems, and *poems* they undoubtedly are. Here is a short consideration of life :—

A crust of bread and a corner to sleep in,
A minute to smile and an hour to weep in,
A pint of joy to a peck of trouble,
And never a laugh but the moans come double ;
And this is life !

A crust and a corner that love makes precious,
With the smile to warm and the tears to refresh us ;
And joy seems sweeter when cares come after ;
And a moan is the finest of foils for laughter ;
And this is life.

Quoting from his *Hunting Song*, we find a perfect picture of autumn days in the South :—

Tek ' a cool night, good an' cleah,
Skiff o' snow upon de groun' ;
Jes' 'bout fall-time o' de yeah
When de leaves is dry an' brown ;
Tek' a dog an' tek' a 'axe,
Tek' a lant'un in yo' han'
Step light whah de switches cracks,
Fis' days huntin' in de lan' :
Down thóo de valleys an' ovah de hills,
Into de wood whah de simmon-tree grows,
Wakin' an' skeerin' de whippo'wills,
Huntin' for coon an' fer 'possum we goes.

Again quoting, from Paul Lawrence Dunbar's *Signs of the Times* :—

Air a-gittin' cool an' coolah,
Frost a-comin' in de night :
Hicka'nuts an' wa'nuts fallin',
'Possum keepin' out o' sight.
Tu'key struttin' in de ba'nyard,
Nary step so proud az his ;
Keep on struttin', Mistah Tu'key,
Yo' don' know whut time it is.

* * *

Pum'kin gittin' good an' yallah
Mek' me open up my eyes ;

Seems lak' it's a-lookin' at me
Jes'a-la' in dah say'in " Pies."
Tu'key gobbler gwine 'roun' blowin',
Gwine 'roun' gibbin' sass an slack;
Keep on talkin', Mistah Tu'key,
You ain't seed no almanac!

And full of real humour and wit is *When Malindy Sings*, so well known :—

G'way an quit dat noise, Miss Lucy—
Put dat music book away;
What de use to kep on tryin'?
Ef you practice twell you're grey,
You cain't sta't no notes a-flyin'
Lake de ones dat rants and rings
F'rom de kitchen to de big woods
When Malindy sings.

And an exquisite thing is *A Summer Night*, by the same author :—

The night is dewy as a maiden's mouth,
The skies are bright as are a maiden's eyes,
Soft as a maiden's breath the wind that flies,
Up from the perfumed bosom of the South.

Like sentinels, the pines stand in the Park;
And hither hastening, like rakes that roam,
With lamps to light their wayward footsteps home,
The fire-flies come stagg'ring down the dark.

* * * *

We will all do a great deal in deference to merit. Ohio will forgive cutting short the review of its poetic achievements, and Indiana, Missouri, Iowa, Kansas and Nebraska will agree to wait for another issue for their survey, so that we may record in this number an outline of the poetic achievements of Colorado, giving an idea of the substance back of the movement started by the Colorado Chapter of the Poetry Society to popularise poetry, which is progressing in leaps and bounds under the able guidance of Mrs. Nellie Burget Miller, Poet Laureate of Colorado and honorary Chairman of the Colorado Chapter of the Poetry

Society, and Mrs. Elizabeth D. Preston, the Chairman of the Chapter.

Believing that many readers of the REVIEW shared with the Editors the desire to know more about Colorado's poetry growth, I asked Mrs. Preston, the Chairman of the Chapter, to write a survey of Colorado poetry. Almost by return of mail came the following graphic, comprehensive review, which will no doubt tempt many to become associated with the Colorado Chapter.

ALICE HUNT BARTLETT.

A SURVEY OF COLORADO POETRY.

By ELIZABETH D. PRESTON.

With an area of 104,000 square miles and a population of less than 1,000,000, Colorado affords her poets ample room in which to sing. Moreover, in her "lifted lands" perpetually snow-capped, her thousand-acred parks and forests, her generous reaches of prairie, her fertile valleys, and mines of precious metals, she provides inspiration for her poet-citizens. About the only lack they find within her borders is the sea, and even for this a substitute has been offered. From the mountains at dawn the plains appear to be an ocean over which a fog still hangs; at noon their miles of waving grain resemble gentle, undulating sea waves on a sunny day; and, as the sun goes down behind the western peaks the shadows settle back over the prairies much as the darkness settles over the waters of a quiet harbour.

"The New West" is a term especially applicable to the inter-mountain land known as Colorado, which became a territory in 1861, and a State as recently as 1876; and, because of this newness, few of our singers, save those who are still very young, are native born. From New England Ohio and Iowa have come a large percentage of the rest, and comment has been made upon the fact that these "aliens" have oftener sung of their adopted than of their early homes.

Helen Hunt Jackson's residence in Colorado Springs

began in 1873, yet her name and achievements are as dear to us to-day as they ever were. Emerson's prophecy that her poems "will take their place among the best of the nineteenth-century literature" was long ago fulfilled.

Following her came Virginia Donaghe McClurg, whose apostrophe—

> O Colored Land! beneath a turquoise sky,
> Sun-kissed from dazzling peaks to opal plains"

has been more widely quoted than any other two lines by a Colorado poet. "Colored earth" and "lifted land" are favourite poetical descriptions of Colorado, a name chosen by the Spaniards because of the hundreds of miles of red sandstone cliffs that reflect themselves in and colour the turbulent rivers in the deep canyons below them, and because of "the red earth stretching towards the plain."

Less generally known, but one to be remembered by all lovers of poetry, is J. Ernest Whitney, who, coming from Connecticut prior to 1890, spent his last four years in Colorado Springs. Of his slender volume of verse it has been written, "it contains tribute to our mountain scenery greater than its beauty has heretofore inspired."

Cy Warman, of Creede, who caught the public's attention through *Sweet Marie*, had written a score of better things that had gone unnoticed. Mamie S. Paden, of Denver, whose lyric entitled *My Boy* struck the popular ear of Scotland 25 years ago, wrote easily and well.

"Colorado snatches at the robes of transient citizens, jealous to share a little in their fame," says Heloise B. Hawkins, herself a poet of more than ordinary attainment, in a recent sketch of Colorado. Doubtless she had in mind Eugene Field, Howard Vigne Sutherland, Mary Stewart, Arthur Chapman, Alfred Damon Runyon and Rev. Robert McIntyre. Field wrote nearly all of his poems while living in Denver; Chapman is internationally known for *Out Where the West Begins*, written in Denver, as were Sutherland's *Idylls of Greece* and McIntyre's—

> . . . the dawn is lovely when the rosy wreaths of cloud
> Fall into purple furrows which the sun has newly plowed;

The prairies like an open hearth, on which the day doth kneel
To blow the coals of morning into splendours that reveal . . .

but who is better known for *The Old Trail* and *At Timberline*.

Edith Colby Banfield, coming from the wooded shores of the Atlantic, was awed by our Colorado Mountains, but never wholly weaned from her first love, as evidenced by the lines :—

These are the mighty ones that I know not,
Of ancient race and kingly lineage—
Too great for me, still holding unforgot
The lesser hillsides of my hermitage,
Like one of lowly birth who homesick clings
To humble memories 'mid halls of kings.

Between 1870, when the collected poems of Lawrence N. Greenleaf appeared in book form, and 1910, when Stanley Wood and Lelah Palmer Morath each published a second volume of verse, not less than forty, more or less creditable, books of poems appeared in Colorado. Many were published in limited editions, and are now to be found only occasionally on the bookshelf of a pioneer, and less often still in a public library. However, many single poems of rare beauty can be unearthed if one seeks for them in the files of the newspapers of that early day.

These older writers were followed by Hattie Horner Louthan, who, with several volumes to her credit, is still writing ; Sarah Elizabeth Howard, with her *Pen Pictures of the Plains* and *A Prairie Idyl* ; Jean Hopper Page, who left *Through Field and Fallow* ; Howard Goldie, who wrote *Mountain Memories* ; McKendrie DeMotte, author of *The Bride of the Silver San Juan*, and Prof. Ammi Hyde, from whose *Morning all the Day* I take the lines :—

Westward I turn and gaze. No night !
Dawn far and faint, with rosy ray,
Betokens still the growing light
That leads the wide, eternal day.

Clem Yohr, of Estes Park, and Walter Wilder, now of Pueblo, wrote verse early in the present century, and James

Barton Adams collected his poems into two volumes, calling one *Breezy Western Verse* and the other *The Dust of the Overland Trail.* In Charles Julian Downey's second book appeared his exquisite lyric *The Bridegroom ;* Thomas J. Anders' best poem is *Prayer at Eventide.* Anna Spencer Twitchell is the *nom de plume* of one who long made Colorado Springs her home, although she published no collection of verse until she had gone elsewhere. We knew her as Mrs. Person, and her *The Wife* is internationally known.

Colorado has had two poets laureate, and the poems of both seem like " pockets " in a vein of gold from which we have been mining ore of a lesser quality. First came Alice Polk Hill of Denver, active in many organisations for women and for 23 years president of the Round Table Club of that city. Her literary mind was many faceted, and her visible presence is even now keenly missed. After her death, and as recently as a year ago, Nellie Burget Miller, of Colorado Springs, was named by the Governor of the State as her successor. Mrs. Miller is prominent in a number of organisations for women ; for two years she served as president of the Colorado Federation of Women's Clubs, and is now chairman of literature for the national Federation ; she is a member of the Poetry Society of America and of the Poetry Society of Great Britain ; her poems have appeared in four recent anthologies of verse, and at the present time she has two books, other than poetry, in the press. But with all this, she is known to the younger writers, not only of Colorado, but of many other States, as one not too busy to write an encouraging word and extend a friendly hand. When one has produced so much that is uniformly good it is difficult for another to make a selection of the best ; personally I like these lines from *Drought :—*

> The brown grass clings to the plains like rust,
> But deep in my heart is the sound of the rain,
> Pat, pat, on the sun-dried crust,
> The stealthy moccasined feet of the rain—
> Like dear remembered dreams of love
> In sleepless nights of pain.

In much of Mrs. Miller's poetry there is an underlying note of wistfulness, a spiritual yearning easily discernible. As an example of whimsical fancy, I quote this from the *The Lyric West* :—

The dawn is a pale cold nun
With a silver rosary,
And a saint am I in the morning—
Who would not be ?

But a man of the world am I,
Careless and debonair,
When the gypsy dusk comes out of the West
With a rose in her tangled hair.

Jean Milne Gower, president of the Poetry Club of Denver, is one to whom these words apply :—

She finds a diamond in the dew,
A jewel in each crimson leaf.

Her tendency is toward free verse, and she has gathered a hundred shorter poems under the title *Kaleidoscope : Little Pictures of Colorado*, and, in this same way, have been preserved four other collections, the most attractive being *The Beads of Namaqua.*

The President of the Colorado Branch of the League of American Pen Women, Clyde Robertson, of Denver, is as versatile as is Mrs. Miller. Although a number of prizes have been awarded her poems, perhaps more stories than poems have come from her pen. Possibly there are better lines in *A Pagan Rose* or *Peter's Garden* than are these selected from *The Palette of God* :—

Bring me soft tints attuned to sound
Of rustling grain and yielding ground,
The silence of the canyons deep,
The whispering winds—the plains asleep—
Bring sparkling gems whose lusters shine
To stud the snow-capped peaks divine :
Bring haunted eyes—drab shades of pain—
To paint the lowly, sun-baked plain—
A picture I'd paint of the West.

There are three singers in Colorado whose tones have been heard, and have been listened to with appreciation, by both the East and the West. For sheer mechanical excellence and chaste beauty, the work of Lillian White Spencer, of Denver, and of Margaret Todd Ritter and Belle Turnbull, of Colorado Springs, is destined to live. The magazines of the country keep us informed as to what this trio is doing.

Less distinctly, but with considerable sweetness and quality, arise the voices of Anna Hansen Hayes, president of the Denver Women's Press Club, Thomas Hornsby Ferril, who appears weekly in the *Denver News*, and Elizabeth Kuskulis. Addie Cropsey Hudson, of Gardner, is best known for *The Ranch Child*, although she has won distinction for her excellent portrayal of the cowboy. The following is from *A-Losin' Effie* :—

There's a row of patted mud pies
  The sun is cookin' yet,
While along the creek's swift current
  The willows seem to fret ;
They didn't mean to do it,
  But they tripped her dancin' feet—
We found her by the bridge there,
  Where the canyon waters meet—
The driftwood caught her apron
  And that held her from the rocks ;
The sorry waters whimpered
  As they tossed her tangled locks.

Foremost in a small group of women who are writing for children, and which includes Tilla Barbara Sperry, Kate Clatworthy, Beatrice Rothrock and Janet Roediger, stands Daisy D. Stephenson, who wrote *Good Tenants* :—

We built a little bird house ;
  'Twas tidy and so strong !
And then we made a little sign :
  " The rent is just a song."
Two bluebirds looked it over ;
  It seemed the finest chance !

They moved right in, and to our joy
They paid us in advance!

An occasional poem comes from Fonetta Flansburg, Pauline Adams, Dorothy Stott Shaw, Marion Forster Gilmore, Herbert E. Mierow, of Colorado Springs; Neita Carey, of Goodrich; Ida Crawford Old and Maud Young Farnworth, of Greeley, and Edna Davis Romig, of Boulder. In Denver there is Jean Allard Jeancon, who has written nothing better than *It's Day in Hopi-Land* and *Good-Night in Hopi-Land;* and there, too, reside Edla Park Peck, Lizbeth Fish, Margaret Harvey, Pearl Townsend Evans, John R. Henderson, Joseph R. Hood, Horace Castle, Channing Sweet, Ruth Lees Olson, and Caroline Lawrence Dier. Beth O'Neil Klotz's home is in Grand Junction.

With the organisation of a Colorado Chapter of the Poetry Society of Great Britain there will appear the fifth group to encourage creative poetical work in this State. The Denver Press Club holds annual contests in four classes; the Poetry Circle of Denver conducts contests in verse writing; the Colorado Federation of Women's Clubs sponsors an annual Poetry Lovers' Feast and contest, under the direction of Delphine Harris Coy, a poet of Fort Collins, and the Colorado Branch of the League of American Pen Women is planning to offer prizes for best poems and short stories written in Colorado.

This brief history has not mentioned the splendid work being done in the English departments of Colorado College, Denver University, the State University of Boulder, the Teachers' College in Greeley, and, in lesser degreee, in other colleges and universities and accredited high schools of Colorado. Illiteracy is but 3·2 per cent. here, and I am inclined to believe that the gift of poesy is inherent in 50 per cent. of the population. Is it too much to hope that a poetical expression commensurate with the great open spaces of this inter-mountain land will soon be forthcoming? If we may not say "Colorado has arrived," may not we say, "Colorado is on the way"?

THE GATEWAY

YOU are the lock, to which I am the key ;
I am the levelled spear, and you the shield ;
You are the hollowed bed, and I the sea ;
I am the harvest of your smiling field.
You are the goal, and I the racking striving ;
I am the sun, and you the welcoming West ;
You are the sun-stained leaves, and I the driving
Tempest that folds them to its storming breast.

I am imperfect, but for that perfection
Built when imperfect you are blent with me ;
This is the road : all else is indirection ;
All else is torture : this is ecstasy.
Knowing this is a gateway to the sky ;
Unknowing it, we shall not need to die.

CLEMENT WOOD.

KILLING TIME

DRUMS are beating in among the bushes,
Villagers abroad the whole night long,
Chanting on the sandbanks by the river ;
Hear a black man's song :—

" Sun gone down, the land, him full of darkness,
The Big Beast hunts a bird behind a tree.
Hark, he crunch him ;—time is fit for killing,
The sun no look, the moon no look for see."
There's growling in the bush, and feathers beating,
The snapping jaw, the flutter of the prey.
" Ho, brother, want to kill for eating ?
Take your spear and choose a thing to slay."

The river rushes with a noise of shouting,
The water-falls have voices like a man.
" Who call me ? " " No one,—only splashing water."
" Who cross my path ? "—" A wounded beast that ran."
The Swift One and the Strong One fight each other
With claw and tooth and talon on the track.
" Ho, brother, want to kill your brother ?
Take your spear before the light come back."

" Ho—oh, my brothers, beat the tomtoms louder,
Look you, light runs low along the sky."
" Hey, moon, come quickly ; perhaps my brother kill me.
Hey, moon, rise up and watch him, or I die."
The great moon eye looks down upon the forest.
Wash your hands, all ye whose spears are red.
" Lo, see the moon stands clear above the hill-top.
Home to the house-yard,—killing time is dead."

WINIFRED COUSINS.

COTSWOLD

GREEN bosom of the English hills,
Whereon, a child, I used to play,
My heart at one with all that fills
The gentle roundness of thy day :
With what a green felicity,
Reflected from thy secret bowers,
My new-sprung thoughts would come to me,
Like the green leaves round sleeping flowers !
'Twould seem the clay my spirit cramped
Could never long a thought endure,
Unless each one were duly stamped
With thy sweet spirit's signature !
Till all my mind was gold and green,
And knowledge wore a kindly cloak,
Most like the sun-flecked shade between
The hazel bough or sapling oak !

Can age forget, withal, so soon
The forms young fancy used to show ?
Or the proud mind with scorn impugn
Its first sweet springing time ?—Ah, no !—
For when men have their way with me,
And I am sad because of it,
And worldly things go ill with me,
Through my much lack of worldly wit :
Still even now, and in this town

Where Squalor leads the way for Pain,
And tireless men go up and down
Upon the empty quest of gain—
Still, still I feel, like a caress,
Green things within me stir and fade,
Resolving all life's bitterness
"To a green thought, in a green shade"!

GEORGE VILLIERS.

GREAT SOULS HAVE LOVED THE MOUNTAINS AND THE SEA

GREAT souls have loved the mountains and the sea,
Have sought communion with them, learned their speech,
Mastered the terms their silences could teach
Of patience, boundless as infinity.

Great souls have loved the mountains and the sea,
The hunger known for which no bread sufficed.
Gray Olivet—what did it say to Christ?
What was the wave-borne word from Galilee?

HILTON R. GREER.

DAWN FROM PIKE'S PEAK

DAWN . . . and an ochre brush
Has marked the eastern sky;
All grey in a shroud of billowy cloud
The distant prairies lie.

Crimson and gold the sky.
With clouds all ragged and torn,
Above and below they eddy and blow
In the cool breeze of the morn.

All flame are the heavens high,
Rose-stained the snow and the lakes;
The promise of day in a wonderful way;
Dawn . . . and the whole world wakes!

ELIZABETH D. PRESTON..

A GHAZAL (IN URDU)*

By His Highness Mir Alinawaz Khan Bahadur, Ruler of Khairpur (Sind).

IF drop thou wouldst thy " purdha "-veil
And with thy beauty wouldst regale
The night, . . . the moon with envy pale
Would hide, . . . and dull her light !

If thou thy heart with mine wouldst link
Of dooms-day judgment who would think ?
Then lawful were my sparkling drink
My love " extract " of Right :

If, youthful, selflessness would share
With us the cup of vintage rare . . .
For modesty thou wouldst not care
Nor I Proprieties cite !

Thy love's lore in my heart is writ,
That when I earthly mansions quit,
A book I should to God submit . . .
To please His august sight.

Your mosques are waste. . . . O Sheikh I pray
Break not with Brahmins ! Let me stay
In Idol-houses, for they may
Be not deflowered quite !

O " Naz " to beauteous Paradise
Go not in giddy gallant's guise !
So that the glow of " Houris' " eyes
May not thy youth-buds blight !

Translated by ELSA KAZI.

INDIA: A NEW PREMIUM VERSE COMPETITION.

The note appended to Mr. S. M. Michael's poem in the last issue of The Poetry Review (p. 196) indicated the aspiration of many natives of India to express themselves in English verse and master an unfamiliar technique as the medium of Eastern ideas and feelings —a remarkable movement with which The Poetry Review is intimately associated, and a development of enormous significance.

* See page 21 for an article on the Ghazal.

It involves, too, a closer acquaintance throughout India with English poetry, classical and contemporary, and here, again, THE POETRY REVIEW is of great value and influence.

In recognition of this remarkable development the Poetry Society has allocated ten guineas of the donation made as a Patron by His Highness the Ruler of Khaipur State, as a special premium for a poem or poems with "India" as the subject, which may be treated incidentally or in the grand manner, but should be Indian in colour and sentiment. No restrictions on style, length, form or content are imposed, except that politics must be avoided. The competition is an open one, but special consideration will be given to entries received from natives of India, and it is suggested that our correspondents in India should organise preliminary contests locally and select therefrom poems for entry in the major contest, which is specially arranged for their benefit. These Indian organisers of the contest should get into communication with the Indian member of the General Council of the Poetry Society, His Honour Judge J. J. Kazi, Khairpur-Mirs, Sind. All entries must be received at the London Office of THE POETRY REVIEW by November 30th.

Envelopes should be addressed "India," THE POETRY REVIEW, 16, Featherstone Buildings, London, W.C.1.

We hope this offer will be so greatly appreciated that we shall be encouraged to organise regional and national Indian English-verse competitions, and eventually be able to publish an Indian poetry "extra."

* * *

A Wordsworth Centre of the Poetry Society is to be formed at a meeting convened by Mrs. Winder to be held at Grasmere on July 26th, when our President will preside and Mr. Gordon Wordsworth will speak.

* * *

A number of Poetry Society lectureships have been instituted to meet the demand from schools, colleges, literary societies and other organisations for addresses and readings. The lectureships are designed to promote sound poetic appreciation. Details may be obtained from the General Secretary.

* * *

Members of any Centre of the Poetry Society wishing to be transferred, either temporarily or permanently, to another Centre, should apply to the General Secretary, through whom all transfers must be made.

SOME BRIEF IMPRESSIONS*

MR. MASEFIELD in *King Cole* does not give us one side only of the showman's life, the sordid or the gay, but treats both aspects with equal sympathy and insight. Though many of us still retain a sneaking love for circuses, we do not always recognise, as Mr. Masefield does, the artistic temperament striving to express itself beneath the veneer of spangles and shoddy tinsel. "King Cole" himself seems to be the embodiment of this temperament, and also of a greater Spirit when making his choice "to wander earth, the friend of man." There are so many lovely passages that one is sorely tempted to indulge in long quotations; these few, however, must suffice. . . .

> "Winter makes solid, yet the Spring,
> That is but flowers, is a stronger thing."
>
> "Friends, fellow mortals, bearers of the ghost
> That burns and breaks its lamp, but is not lost . . ."
>
> "The nightly mercy of the eventide" . . .
>
> "Like floating flowers
> Came butterflies, the souls of summer hours,
> Fluttering about the van."

The personality of King Cole abides, but the vision of him that chiefly remains is, not "shining in his robe of flame," but with the robins nestling to his old grey coat. Where the other volume is concerned, I feel I cannot improve upon the introduction of the publisher, printed on the loose cover. . . . "Mr. Masefield has himself chosen from his work in verse the poems he likes best, and they are gathered here in one volume. In addition to these he has included three poems never published before. . . . This is a book for all lovers of Masefield's works, and for those as well who would, under the happiest auspices, acquaint themselves with his poems." I even added to these auspices, for I took the book close to the sea to read. Those who desire "to obtain a clearer, deeper sense of the best" in Mr. Masefield's poetry, I advise to do the same. This volume contains most of the poems we chiefly love . . . *Sea Fever*, *The Wild Duck*, *The Wanderer*, *A Creed*, *The West Wind*, *The Khalif's Judgment*, and many favourite passages from the long narrative poems.

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* *King Cole and Other Poems*, John Masefield (Heinemann, 6s.). *Selected Poems*, John Masefield (Macmillan, 2 dollars). *Poems*, Wilfred Scawen Blunt (Macmillan, 7s. 6d.). *The Forge in the Forest*, Charles G. D. Roberts (Dent, 4s. 6d.). *The Un-Divine Comedy*, Zygmunt Krasinsky, translated by Harriette E. Kennedy, B.A. (Harrap, 6s.).

I would pay high tribute to the craftsmanship of Mr. Blunt, as another Poetry Reviewer has done at greater length than I can be afforded,* but his poems leave a sense of regret rather than of satisfaction behind them. Even that exquisitely told tale, *Esther*, leaves a bitter taste in the mouth; and *The Wisdom of Merlyn*, far reaching, sage, prophetic, and great in many ways, yet repels while it fascinates. The poet's own philosophy of life seems to be epitomised in the lines—

"Merlyn's message is this: he would bid thee have done with pride,
What has it brought thee but grief, thy parentage with the Gods, thy kinship with beasts denied?
What thy love of a life to come in a cloud-world deified?

Take the thing which thou hast. Forget thy kingdom unseen.
Lean thy lips on the earth! she shall bring new peace to thy eyes with her healing vesture green.
Drink once more at her fount of love, the one true hippocrene."

Yet even this philosophy is refuted in the prison sonnets. *The Court of Pennance* is surely worth committing to memory?

"Behold the Court of Pennance. Four gaunt walls
Shutting out all things but the upper heaven.
Stone flags for floor, where daily from their stalls
The human cattle, in a circle driven,
Tread down their pathway to a mire uneven,
Pale-faced, sad-eyed, and mute as funerals.
Woe to the wretch whose weakness unforgiven
Falters a moment in the track or falls!

Yet is there consolation. Overhead
The pigeons build and the loud jackdaws talk,
And once in the wind's eye, like a ship moored,
A sea-gull flew and I was comforted.
Even here the heavens declare Thy glory, Lord,
And the free firmament Thy handiwork."

Mr. Chesterton has written a preface to Miss Kennedy's translation of the Polish drama, *The Un-Divine Comedy*, by Zygmunt Krasinsky. In it he excuses, as it were, the apparent morbidity of the author, since the condition of Poland in the early thirties could hardly produce other than a pessimistic writer. The translator seems to have kept closely to the Polish spirit in this tragedy of a

* Poetry Review, July–August, 1921.

proud man's loss of present joys for the sake of a false ideal, of his disillusionment, of how his sins were visited upon the feeble body of his son, of how revolution (the prophetic foreshadowing of Bolshevism) spread through his land, and of his last heroic stand with the small remnant of his followers. Translations are not easy, and Miss Kennedy's achievement is no small one.

Mr. Roberts invariably makes one feel attuned to his imposition of time and place. One becomes transported, geographically and chronologically, for the moment, and at the conclusion of the reading comes the inevitable shock of landing. His magic carpet on this occasion carries one to Arcadie in the days of enmity between French and English settlers in Canada. This is "the Narrative of the Arcadian Ranger, Iean de Mer, Seigneur de Briart; and how he crossed the Black Abbe; and of his Adventures in a Strange Fellowship," vivid, picturesque, romantic.

EVELYN D. BANGAY.

AN OCTAVE.

Machines and Men. Helen Stocker. (Selwyn and Blount.)
The Dryad. Margaret Ormiston. (Erksine Macdonald.)
Songs of Many Days. Nina Salaman. (Elkin Matthews.)
The Kingfisher. John Doe. (Elkin Matthews.)
The True Aristocracy. Rev. E. E. Bradford. (Kegan Paul.)
The Living God. Who Matters Who Wrote it? (G. P. Putnam.)
Westering Winds. Florence Cortis-Stanford. (Gowans and Grey.)
My Garden. J. R. Aitkin. (Burns Oates.)

The authoress of *Machines and Men* has something to say and says it strongly and well. There is much genuine poetry in this volume and several lines that strike the memory instantaneously, one, "Death went padding like a panther," and these on *Fire*:

> "I am only a mouldering spark
> As I crackle and creep
> From a little black heap
> In the dark,
> With a sound like the patter of feet."

There runs also through the verses a delicate perception of the delight of recurring sounds.

> "No class or clan had any man
> In that great sacrifice,
> Dying in dugouts overran
> By water, rats and lice,
> Or penned in Hospitals of pain
> Like vivisected mice."

Here the consonants wait on the vowels as dancers in a measured dance. One word with regard to her oft-repeated scorn of creeds—which touches not her poetic expression but her subject matter. Present-day Socialists ignore the fact that the first to cry out on behalf of the poor or down-trodden were the prophets of a creed. To refer to one only of the innumerably indignant declamations concerning the oppressed, "What mean ye that ye beat My people to pieces, and grind the faces of the poor?" It is not the creed but the ignoring of it that has crowded our streets with

> "the faces of the poor,
> Pale as moonlight, haggard as the dawn",

and

> "—the hurts of outraged youth."

When this hatred of worship is untouched on, the poems—such as *Aldrington, Sussex*—are finely melodious.

> "And suddenly across the livid sky,
> The streaming storm cloud wimples like a veil,
> And booming from the caverns of the night
> Sweeps the strong freshness of a sou-west gale."

The Dryad opens poetically, but the first line of the first verse starts off with "Far in a forest wandered a dryad," and the next verse runs, "Wild she roamed, in leaf-sewn kirtle," which is impossible to "keep in step" with, "Far in a forest"; and many of the lines are so uneven as to bring the reader up with a jerk. "When Winter days were past and over" falls into quite other syllabic accents to the first line already quoted. Then "lulled by the turtle" is too evidently dragged in to rhyme with "kirtle." *Youth and Age*, without being startlingly original, is poetic. *Gardens of Babylon* has colour and, if easy-running, is poetry, but *The Stranger* is disastrously poor. If the authoress would actually go out from her "Enchanted Forest" "to the world of pain, where men can live and love and fight in anger," she would probably find a more abiding and firmer foothold; "bees" and "turtles" and "skylarks" and "heather bloom" will not cause the aching hearts of men to vibrate for more than a passing idle moment. Beauty without strength degenerates into mere prettiness.

The old Judaic gift of magic music on the harp has descended to Nina Salaman. Thought and power are in the slender volume of *Songs of Many Days*. Nature's charms touch her, but ever to the deeper meanings of Life. Her tremendous aim lies half-hidden in almost every poem.

"How would I batter at the gates of Heaven!
Never would I cease till God should hear."

In *The Kingfisher*, the sonnet, *My Garden*, and the verses to *The Kingfisher* and *To the Whites-eye* are charming; the rest are somewhat too heavily laden with pessimism (and rather a usual pessimism). This can be forgiven if the music of the lines are of so dominant a nature as to arrest us without regard to their message, such as Shelley's "O Life! O Death! O Time!" but not otherwise. The concluding lines of John Doe's volume form its best criticism.

"The setting of my life,
For I have failed to break by thought unbound,
The prison of its misery."

When Alan Brockington wrote *The Common Epiphany*, he illumined the prose of it (and much of it is quite ordinary prose) with a spiritual insight that redeemed it, but the Rev. E. E. Bradford has written of some school-boy experiences without spiritual insight, and it is hardly going too far to say that there is no poetry in all the 116 pages. It must be left at that; Mr. Bradford may be unable to see the gulf between his rhymed prose and that of Alan Brockington's. Probably, were he able to see it he would never have written *The True Aristocracy*.

The Living God, by "Who Matters who Wrote it?" really matters not at all.

Mrs. Robertson Cameron (Florence Curtis-Stanford) reveals in all her verse the ever-recurring sense of the goodness of God. "That all-pervading Presence—Finds me still," "And sees God shining in the dew-drop grey." "And everywhere there's surely God, Oh seeing one for you." This should be essentially the inner vision of the poet, but there is a haunting sense of a lack of virile perception; it is as if a tired, weeping woman saw the hidden goodness of the great "Pervading Presence," and not a strong undaunted soul asserting, in spite of untoward circumstances, its unyielding grasp of God. The lines *White Horses* suggest a perilous comparison with Rudyard Kipling's masterpiece, but *Cottage Sounds* is full of poetic sense. Grief, weariness, loneliness, and weeping appear to be the only beads that modern poetesses can thread together—is it a sign of the times? Mrs. Robertson Cameron is evidently in love with "That ancient sad sweet sorrow." This, because she writes poetically, is the pity o'it.

It is a pleasure to turn to the verses of J. R. Aitkin; a vibrant

sense of well-being and of joy palpitates in almost every poem; well may he apostrophise "Mystery" with his cheerful cry:

"Go, seek thy foster-mother, Night,
For me the Day-Star and the Light."

He invites you to

"Come to the storehouse of my mind
Where Hope her choicest fruit has laid."

When is a ridiculously slight but delightful little thing. *Curious* might have been written by Wordsworth, but is (low be it spoken !) more musical by reason of its being free of any pedantry or schoolmaster attitude. *Night—Morning* reveals his manly courageous creed. These poems strike the ear as if one were to hear suddenly, in a hospital ward full of diseased and groaning folk, the clear melody of a young man's whistling, sweet and strong, outside in the flowering lane.

ARTHUR HOOD.

THE WAYLAND-DIETRICH SAGA*

I HAVE before me the first three numbers of this interesting series—containing the first 83 pages. There are to be 39 numbers in Volume I. "The work will appear in shilling numbers, three being issued simultaneously on the 15th of each month" (Publishers' Foreword). Miss Buck has "pieced together the Tale of Dietrich from such mediæval 'epic' poems, ballads and prose narratives as we have left in European Literature."

Judging by these three first numbers she has done her work well. Dietrich of Bern she identifies with the great "Theodoric the Ostrogoth who sat not unworthily in the seat of the Roman Emperors." The sources of her stories are of the thirteenth century. "Therefore," says Miss Buck, "though Theodoric lived at the end of the fifth century, the setting is the thirteenth century, precisely as Malory places King Arthur and his knights in a fifteenth century setting." Miss Buck bids fair to realise her purpose. She uses blank verse—vigorous and simple. The setting is at Akka (Acre) during King Richard Cœur de Lion's occupation of the city. The "Tale" is one told by a monk in after years of retirement in a monastery of what he began to tell "that night in June

"In Akka's garden 'neath the crescent moon,
For a queen's pleasure."

* Dietrich of Bern and his Companions: Preceded by the Saga of Wayland Smith. Part I. The Song of Wayland. By Katherine Buck (A. H. Mayhew, 56 Charing Cross Road, W.C.2.)

If Miss Buck can maintain the high level of her description "of that night in June," she will achieve her purpose and add some fine poetry to our literature.

> "One night I'll ne'er forget . . . o'er the far hills
> Crept a faint purple flush . . . The hidden sun
> From clouds of rosy grey cast golden streaks
> That deepened into orange, tarnished, shrank
> And vanished, leaving naught but lavender;
> Then chilly grew the night, but suddenly
> The grey film sprang to life . . . a deep rose red
> Tinged the cloud edges, soon to die away
> In tender shades of pink . . . The great grey clouds
> Rolling spray seawards, o'er them sailed the moon,
> A golden crescent . . . Purple robed the hills . . .
> A deep imperial purple, crimson tinged . . .
> The western sky like burnished brass appeared
> Paling to lemon, orange shade between
> This merged in Nile green and soft tints of jade
> To melt at last in blue infinity.
> Within the garden lilac shades 'gan fall
> Upon the emerald of the smooth cropt turf.
>
> Faint murmurs rising from the town below
> Fell on our ears not unmelodiously,
> And in mysterious echoes died away.
> Far off some minstrel a lute soft did play;
> The Syrian slaves crept silently to light
> The hanging lamps . . . The pages brought warm wraps."

Then follows a really brilliant description of Queen Berengaria's attire.

> "On each side of her raven tresses hung
> A shimmering veil of silver tissue woven
> . . . .
> This was confined by a rich diadem,
> Studded with triple bands of gleaming gems,
> Rubies and sapphires and green emeralds."

Of course Miss Buck does not always reach so high a level. Occasionally her blank verse palls, as, *e.g.*,

> "And faith! I think a little she liked me . . ."

almost sinking into sentimentality in

How long the years since my sweet Lilias died."

Very rarely, however, do we find such lines. Generally the verse flows on "not unmelodiously."

Miss Buck intersperses the blank verse with lyrics sung by minstrels, as, *e.g.*

"Love, I have served you long,
No pity had you;
You know no good but wrong
Came to me from you . . .
Love, I accuse you not,
But at least send me
Peace and torment me not;
Or I pray end me."

Miss Katherine M. Buck "has arrived," and all lovers of the wonderful literature of our Germanic ancestors, all Wagnerian students and lovers of his immortal operas, and all who revel in a strong and human story, strongly told, will welcome eagerly the 15th of each month till the series is complete.

ERNEST J. B. KIRTLAN, D.D.

THE PRIME MINISTER ON ART IN LIFE

"IT is of the greatest importance to the country, whether it is rich or poor, whether it is well-to-do or in distress, whether our people are contented or discontented, whether they are in work or out of work, that the things of the spirit, the things of the soul, the things of the imagination, the purities and the sustenance of the mind should be attended to without any neglect whatever. . . . We must have our collections, our galleries, illustrating the history, the style, and the genius of art. But unless by some method or other we can bring that into touch with the life of our own time, we are leaving our work sadly unfinished. Art is not a collection of things in galleries; art is a quality and a savour in life. We must remember not only the connoisseur, but the user, not merely the man with a gallery, but the man with a cupboard, a table, and kitchen chairs. The great problem that you and I have to solve is how in everyday life the sentiments, the feelings, the appreciations in which we ourselves take so much delight, will be shared by the great mass of our fellow beings."—The Prime Minister, at the 21st annual meeting of the National Art Collections Fund, May 30th, 1924.

THE PREMIUM EDITOR'S LETTER

THE PARENTHOOD OF POETRY.

SOME few correspondents are making a *cause célèbre* of my remarks on the spelling of "cinema." It is, of course, in English, an abbreviation of "cinematograph," a word of some forty years of age, and at one time in general use; but the recent craze for the "k" spelling, relating it to "kinetics," would be perfectly allowable if "kinetics" itself were a correct form. But it is not: it is due to a mistake of Edison, a genius who had at least one momentary aberration; when he derived his coined word from "kinemos" or "kinesis," he seems to have forgotten that in every other relevant word in the English language "kappa" had been transliterated into "c." "Kinetics," of course, is in general use: but look it up in a standard dictionary, and you will read "See Cinematics."

Now this is a shibboleth and an allegory. The man who writes "kinema" will say also "commence" when he means "begin"; he will say "as" when he means "like," "should" for "ought," "obtain" for "get." He will spell "Irak" with a "q," as though the blind English "q" meant anything at all without its little attendant dog, the letter "u." He will give newfangled pronunciations to "Prague" and "Belgrade" which would make nonsense of their historic use in English poetry. He has, in fact, the cast of mind which certain city boarding-house habitués term "suburban." It is not, however, typically suburban: it is merely pretentious, and a pretentious error is far more noxious than an honest ignorance or a slip of the pen such as often nowadays will write "beseeched" for "besought" or "chided" for "chidden."

Here we arrive at our subject. If a Premium Editor were to write an *Inferno*, he would arrange *two* lowest circles in Hell, each well in view of the other, one for the banal, the other for the spurious; they should stay there as long as they wished, but only their own leaden stupidity would keep them there. Some hundreds of people contrive to keep the middle path, and their work is printed in magazines. These are not poets: they make—but it is manufacture without creation. The real poet is the smith of his verse too; but of its content he is the mother: he conceives something that is begotten from without by a Potter—and a Father.

It comes to him as it came to Danaë, in a shower of fairy gold; and he catches his breath—or even weeps—for at that moment it counts for something that half his ancestors were women. Then comes travail and the burden of the immortal. The children are born and carried on a shield, but not yet does he send them forth: there are milk-teeth to lose and tousled hair to cut away and childish

weaknesses to eradicate. It is true that sometimes they are born after the manner of Aphrodite or Minerva; more generally, the nursing is long; but, long or short, in such manner poems are made. This is why it is impossible to teach the writing of poetry. You can obey Chesterton's "law of the leisure needed for the awakening of wonder," but you cannot show a man how to lift up his heart unto the Lord. When he has done that for himself, and the flying seed has rested upon him and his mind has conceived—yes, you may help him now.

How is he to know, then, if Poetry has come to him? He will be utterly broken by the beauty of it.

For the unbelieving, let us approach this truth by another path. The first verses of a child usually begin "Onward, onward, ever onward, flows the river to the sea," and the second "I am tired of the noise and strife." Ridiculous and true as this is, Poetry is overshadowing him: Columbus is discovering Genoa; America will come later. The ideas of older people are less elemental. Here are the contents of three typical essays in verse: (*a*) Life is like a skein of wool; (*b*) Snowdrops are the bells of Candlemas; (*c*) Will God exact day labour, light denied? (*a*) is worthless because obvious, commonplace and trite. (*b*) makes possible, once in the course of a poem, a pretty reference to snowdrops as the white bells of Candlemas; it will not furnish material for a poem, nor will it make even one line if it is used as a simile instead of as a metaphor. (*c*) is poetry, and if moving to us, how much more so to its blind author! I dare swear that Milton's reception of this thought was a flood of grateful tears.

And now, having said that the poet must be a parent as well as a craftsman, let us add that he must be a craftsman as well as a parent. When the poem has come, clothe it, not fashionably, but simply. If it falls naturally into place, all the better. Edith Sitwell's lines:

> "Hell is no vastness: it has naught to keep
> But little rotting souls and a small sleep"

are great poetry in their content and utterly simple in their form. Rules of versification are for beginners: the sophisticated writer, like the practised cyclist, has forgotten the rules because he has formed habits. The beauties of verse lie in occasional and characterful breaking of the rules; the pretentious prig who discovers a manual of table manners and binds his soul to them has no wit for an emergency because he has no guiding outlook, no habit of initia-

tive. Observe your metrical rules if you will, but as the flute observes them, not as the drum. The external, mechanical beauties of poetry are not in the observance of "marking time," which some call correct scansion, but in time variations. Tie a couple of notes together, split another single one into two, use the grace-note. Is this artifice? It is nature. We want simplicity; but the simplicity not of a stone wall, but of a cherub's face. One of the factors in the proverbial beauty of Keats's

> "The same that hath
> Charmed magic casements, opening on the foam
> Of perilous seas, in faëry lands forlorn"

is that quivering grace-note in "perilous."

It is so easy to forget that simplicity is often the result of "putting it back on the lathe, again, again and again," destroying that mosaic of polysyllables, that frozen meerschaum froth that is so easy to write, and rebuilding with children's bricks, the most difficult study in the world. One of the characters in C. E. Montague's *Fiery Particles* says delightfully: "Wan thing ye'll have noticed. It goes deep. An artist's creation—a pome or wax figure—may seem mere foolishness to the minds of the half-idducated that think they know all before them; an', mark you, the very same artist will find his intintions read off straight an' easy at sight be simple uns'phist'cated folk, sailors an' trappers an' cowboys, that live with the earth an' walk be the fixed stars. It's been noticed repeatedly." It would be difficult to find unquestioned poetry simpler than Belloc's, say in "The devil didn't like Him—and He died," and Belloc writes: "Verse is to be conducted like a gunner's team; it is to be controlled like a ship held to a course; it is to be fashioned like a carving out of brute boxwood. It is a conscious creation though it is aided by a god." One of Miss Sackville West's striking descriptions, "He who liked to condense a large vague district of imaginings into a final phrase," is an inspired summary of the most difficult part of the poet's action (as distinguished from the prior phase of passive reception). The fault in the efforts of people who "just threw it off" is a species of sacrilege; it is the burning of false fire in the temple of the Lord.

The prize, this time, goes to Marion Allison, who has captured an ephemeral mood with strength and skill. She has, however, arranged no action in the foreground of this impressive scene, and the result is of the nature of a fragment. Three flights of five steps and nothing at the top! Still, she well deserves the prize.

WIND IN THE NIGHT.

Dark branches over the window weep,
(Through fretted leaves the moon is cold)
Green-gloomed on a white-washed wall they sweep
Their shuddering leaves that shake and fold
Silver on silver . . . the moon is cold.

High-flung the dizzy branches sway,
(In a dizzy brain wild thoughts are blown)
And sleep is chased away and away
By wind-shaken shadows, dark, moon-thrown
On still white walls. Wild thoughts are blown

'Twixt shattered waking and terrible dream.
(Through rifted clouds the moon is cold)
And sleep is fraught with a nightmare theme
Of wind-torn leaves that shake and fold
Silver on silver . . . the moon is cold.

There are some welcome poems by recent prize-winners, Nancy Pollok, Vera I. Arlett and E. Joyce Harrison. The six books are awarded to Hugh Robert Wade, Phyllis Hastings, Audrey Wrangham, "Philomel," Hilda Hart and Evelyn D. Bangay. Florence Overton and Una Malleson are commended.

O. C. DE C. E.

Recent prize-winners and other advanced students are invited to state what, in their opinion, is the matter with the following verses. Criticisms must not exceed 100 words. No prize is offered, but the best criticism will be printed in this page.

The spell of eve is over all
The early lilacs of the sky,
For with a swiftness magical
They change to violets, and I
See the grey houses on the hill
Flush into rose and daffodil.

The early violets of the sky
Become the berries of the sloe;
The primrose windows wink and die;
The winds of utter darkness blow:
I climb to where, bright steel in hue,
Riseth my star, my faith in you.

$50.00 FOR STAR POEMS.

AS a tribute to Miss Evelyn M. Watson, the American poet, who, being blind, has never seen the lovely stars blossom, as Longfellow expressed it, "silently one by one in the infinite meadows of heaven," the Aries Book Club of Buffalo, Miss Watson's native city, offers through THE POETRY REVIEW $50.00 in prizes for a "Star" Poem Contest, as a companion contest to the Sea Sonnet Contest and the City Sonnet Contest for the Bartlett prizes, but in this case other forms of poetry are admitted besides sonnets.

Two prizes of $20.00 each will be awarded to the best two sonnets of Petrarchan form, and $10.00 to the best Star poem, which must not exceed 20 lines. In addition, assuming that the entries will be as numerous as in the Sea Sonnet Contest (in which there were over 800), the twenty-five best sonnets and the five best poems other than sonnets will receive honourable mention, all of which may be later published in a "Star" Anthology by the Aries Book Club in honour of Miss Watson.

Miss Watson, who is the author of the volumes entitled *Niagara, Kingdom Beautiful* and *Divine Fire*, recently published a book of poems entitled *Flame of Stars*, in which she expressed her mystic impressions of the firmament which her blindness has prevented her from beholding. As she expressed her wish that she might know what the stars look like, her friends decided to offer the prizes and thereby bring forth the poetic expressions, descriptions and interpretations on the subject of the stars from the world's poets.

The human intellect has been challenged by the number, the distance, size, magnitude and mystery of stars, and the old poets wrote inspiring poems about them and about the heavens, among them Milton, Moore, Shakespeare, Tennyson, Byron, Wordsworth, Arnold and Longfellow, and also contemporary poets. But in many cases the poetic excellence exceeded scientific accuracy, which, concededly, other things being equal, is to be sought.

The grandeur of the starry heavens, with the hundreds of millions of stars, and the beauty and attributes of individual stars supply a vastness of poetic wealth that makes haphazard imagination wasteful! The Biblical poet combined more scientific knowledge and poetic beauty and simplicity than many poets have expressed since when he wrote "Canst thou bind the sweet influences of the Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion?" The scientific definition of stars—*i.e.*, any of the self-luminous heavenly bodies—will govern in this contest. Astronomically the sun is a star and as such is a legitimate subject, but the partly luminous planets of our solar system, such as Jupiter, not being stars, cannot be the subject-matter of the poems, though they may be part of the setting of a poem, as

they are part of the solar system. Poets who desire to deal with constellations in connection with localities are requested to ascertain that these groups are visible in the localities and seasons indicated, to avoid the rejection of otherwise meritorious poems.

The closing date will be December 15th, 1924. All entries must be addressed, as before, to Mrs. Alice Hunt Bartlett, 27, West 67th Street, N.Y.C. As manuscripts submitted in competition cannot be returned, contributors should keep a copy of their poems.

* * *

The usual general premium of £2 for the best poem or poems submitted to the Premium Editor during the month (without limitation of subject) is continued, and six books will be awarded to the "highly commended."

Not more than *two* poems may be submitted at the same time.

Every entry must be certified as original and as not having appeared in print, and the name and address of the competitor must be attached to the MS.

If criticism is desired, 2s. 6d. and a stamped addressed envelope must be enclosed. (If a more detailed postal criticism is desired, 5s. and a stamped addressed envelope should be sent.)

Entries must be either typewritten or written in ink on one side of the paper only, and contributors must be members of the Poetry Society or registered postal subscribers to THE POETRY REVIEW.

All MSS. submitted for premium awards should be addressed to "The Premium Editor," and should reach this office *not later than* August 1st. Entries cannot be returned, but they must remain at the disposal of the Editor (whether awarded a premium or not) until after the issue of the next number of THE POETRY REVIEW, in which the award will be published, and they may be published in THE POETRY REVIEW or elsewhere at the Editor's option.

* * *

The Monday "readings" at the Royal Chapel of the Savoy will be continued during July, but suspended during August and September. The meeting, on the birthday of Robert Burns (July 21st), will begin at 5.15, the special speaker being the Rev. Dr. John Hutton. On July 7th Miss J. Huntsman deals with "Shelley," on July 14th Mrs. Mends Gibson with "Blake," and on the 28th Mr. Kyle with "Gray."

* * *

For particulars of the Parr-Gere Music Poem Contest see page 202 (May-June). The result of the Bartlett City Sonnet Contest will be announced in our next issue.

THE BYRON CENTENARY: NOTABLE POETRY SOCIETY CELEBRATION.

The meeting organised by the Poetry Society and held at 139, Piccadilly, on April 11th, to commemorate the centenary of the death of Byron, assumed a highly significant international complexion, and afforded ample evidence of the "World-wide Fame of Byron," on which subject Mr. K. K. Ardaschir, the Anglo-Persian poet, delivered a most impressive and impassioned eulogy. The following report of the meeting appeared in the *Daily Telegraph* for April 12th:

"There was a wonderful international tribute to the genius of Byron at a gathering organised by the Poetry Society, and held yesterday afternoon at 139, Piccadilly, the house of Baron d'Erlanger and once the residence of the poet. The meeting, one of those arranged in connection with the commemoration of the centenary of Byron's death, was presided over by Lord Darling, and was participated in by the diplomatic representatives of France, Italy, Spain, Greece, Switzerland, Poland, Chili, Sweden, and Colombia, as well as of the United States of America. On the table of the great chamber in which the meeting took place there was a bust of the poet, lent by Mr. John Murray; and among those who occupied seats on the platform was the present Lord Byron. The University of Oxford was represented by Dr. R. W. Macan and Cambridge by Sir James George Frazer. A noteworthy feature of an altogether remarkable occasion was an announcement by the Greek Minister that, in addition to the Byron centenary celebrations in Greece, it is proposed that one of the small towns now in process of construction for the housing of Greeks from Asia Minor shall be named after Byron. It is to be called 'Byronia,' and its streets are to be named after the poet's friends, Thomas Moore, John Murray, Hobhouse, Shelley, Trelawny, and others. 'And,' added the Minister, 'it is only natural to think that there will also be a Maid of Athens street.'

"Lord Darling, in his opening remarks, said he thought that if Byron deserved any punishment for the many faults that were attributed to him he had received that punishment in the statue that had been erected in his honour in Hyde Park. (Laughter.) This was one of the many statues in London that one could not admire. It was usual to blame Governments for everything, including monuments, but this particular statue could not be attributed to the action of any Government, for its existence was due to a democratic vote. Anyone who inspected the various models could, for the payment of a shilling, receive a ballot paper, and the outcome of the ballot was this statue. From some points of view the result

of that democratic ballot might be said to be a poetic justice, and the statue might be regarded as an absolution of Lord Byron for all that he had ever done. (Laughter.)

"The vice-president of the Poetry Society, Mr. K. K. Ardaschir, in an address on 'The World Fame of Byron,' alluded to the world-wide arrangements for the celebration of the centenary.

French and Italian Appreciation.

"The French Ambassador (the Comte de Saint-Aulaire), at the outset of a speech delivered in French, made a witty comparison between Byron's flouting of social conventions and the position of the diplomat who is traditionally supposed to be so close a stickler for all the conventions. How difficult, how irksome would the rôle of the diplomat have been to the poet whom they were commemorating! (Laughter.) Some people were fond of dwelling exclusively and uncharitably on the sins that Byron committed, but one could agree with the chairman that the sinner had paid the penalty in the statue in Hyde Park. (Laughter.) His Excellency went on to speak of the great influence that Byron had exercised on the literature and poetry of France, and as evidence of his widespread popularity pointed to the very numerous translations of his works. There were certain aspects in which English and French poetry were not in accord—'we are always in accord in the realm of politics,' his Excellency remarked parenthetically—(laughter)—but there was a great deal in the form, the style, and the conception of Byron's poetry that appealed particularly to the French mind and taste. Byron was a great artist, and the divine music of his poetry had been fully appreciated by French criticism, which recognised, moreover, that his very inequalities and inconsistencies were marks of his genius. Apart from the entrancing interest of Byron's narratives, there was in his poetry an artistry that was intimately appreciated by the French romantic ideal in literature. It could not be charged against Byron that he was unduly endowed with bourgeois ideas or codes. (Laughter.) Besides being a great poet he was a great hero—one who sacrificed his life in the pursuit of a noble ideal—and for this, as well as for his immortal poems, he was beloved in France. (Cheers.)

"The Italian Ambassador (Marchese della Torretta) spoke with enthusiasm of Byron's intimate associations with and love of Italy. He loved Italy, as did Shelley and Keats, and he derived in that fair land a great deal of the inspiration which his genius transformed into the highest flights of poetry. Besides his love of the monuments and of the natural beauties of Italy, the poet was a most ardent

supporter of the cause of Italian national unity. Byron, his Excellency declared, was still a name to conjure with in Italy, and no other country was associating itself more heartily with the centenary commemoration of the great English poet. (Cheers.)

"The Swiss Minister (Monsieur C. R. Paravicini), who followed, mentioned that on May 3rd a monument will be unveiled to the memory of Byron on the shores of the Lake of Geneva, and one might hope that in this monument the poet would have more luck than he had had in regard to other memorials. (Laughter.) The memory of Byron was potent to-day in Switzerland, as it was in other countries abroad, and this fact was attested by the programme of centenary celebrations that had been arranged throughout Switzerland. Meetings were to be held all over the country in honour of one who was a great friend of Switzerland, a land in which Byron found a pleasant retreat, and from the beauties of which he drew inspiration for some of his poems. (Cheers.)

"The Chilean Minister (Señor Don A. Edwards), in tendering the homage of his country, recalled that at one period Byron nursed dreams of settling in South America—'not to speculate,' to use his own words, but to enjoy an agreeable retreat.

"The Polish Minister (Monsieur Konstantin Skirmunt) alluded to the alliance between poetry and national aspirations in his country, and he assured his hearers that there, as elsewhere, Byron was greatly esteemed and read.

Ties with Greece.

"The very particular association of Byron with Greece was alluded to by the chairman before he called on the Greek Minister to speak. It was, of course, in that land, Lord Darling remarked, that Byron consecrated his last days to the cause of an oppressed people, and it was there that he met his death. That meeting associated itself with national celebrations organised in Greece,and congratulated the Greek Government and the University of Athens on the comprehensive programme organised in honour of the poet's memory. (Cheers.)

"The Greek Minister (Monsieur D. Caclamanos) said that in arranging the Byron centenary celebrations the Government of Greece and the University of Athens were but giving expression to the general feeling of the Greek people. 'Greece,' said the Minister, 'was the great source of Lord Byron's inspiration, ever since his youthful beauty and his luminous genius mingled their unperishable reflections with the blue colour of Attica's skies. He sang of all Greece, her skies, her seas, her mountains, her promon-

tories, her flowers, her everlasting temples, her marble virgins, and her virgins in the flesh. Of her freedom he sang, too—first, when her freedom was but a distant dream, and later when the freedom of Greece had become a reality, on which, as Iphigenia in Aulis, the poet had come to immolate himself. Let us think that something higher than the mere disillusionment of a life full of trouble brought Byron to Missolonghi. Let us think that something more than the thirst for adventure led him to Greece's shores. Let us be convinced with the nation for which he gave his life, that what brought him there was the love of higher things and better days. That was the "unbounded hope." I think that he went to Greece, as a true Englishman with a premonition of the splendid motto of the life of another great Englishman, Stevenson—"High thinking—hard work—adventurous excitement." ' (Cheers.)

"Votes of thanks to the speakers were accorded on the motion of Mr. Willingham Franklin Rawnsley (president of the Poetry Society), seconded by Lord Byron, who remarked that the nation owed him a debt of gratitude for never having written a line of poetry. (Laughter.) In the course of the meeting, in addition to the speeches, a poetic tribute to Byron was read by its author, Baron d'Erlanger. This, written by the Baron in 1917, recalled the associations of Byron with 139, Piccadilly, and evoked his memory in relation to the national stress in the midst of the Great War. Three of Byron's songs: 'There be none of Beauty's Daughters' (Roger Quilter), 'Sun of the Sleepless' (Mendelssohn), 'So We'll Go no more a'roving' (M. V. White) were sung by Lady Maud Warrender; and Mr. Henry Ainley recited portions of several of Byron's poems."

A BYRON MEMORIAL.

THE following letter appeared in the *Morning Post* of May 27th:—

Sir,—In further celebration of the Byron Centenary, the Council of the Poetry Society (Incorporated) has decided to supplement their very effective meetings on the 11th and 19th of April, the international character of which you noted, by promoting a definitely English memorial.

The authorities of Westminster Hospital, now in course of reconstruction, have accepted our offer to endow in perpetuity a Byron Memorial Bed. With this object a Byron Costume Ball is being organised and an influential body of patrons is being formed. As President, I have the privilege of claiming interest and support

for this idea, and I appeal for offers of assistance in its organisation to be sent to the General Secretary.

Moreover, as the proceeds from this social gathering, however successful, will not be sufficient to provide the necessary funds, our treasurer, Mr. C. Oscar Gridley, J.P., will be glad to receive at the offices of the Society, 16, Featherstone Buildings, W.C.1, special donations to this Byron Memorial Fund. We hope to secure in particular the co-operation of the Greek community in England, who have a lively appreciation of the services Byron rendered to Greece, which Athens recently recognised in an eloquent manner.—Yours, etc.,

W. F. Rawnsley,
President.

The Poetry Society (Incorporated),
16, Featherstone Buildings, W.C.1.
May 26th.

[We commend this letter to the notice of readers, and particularly to our American friends, who, we hope, will associate themselves with this eminently desirable form of commemorating a notable centenary. Local committees might be formed to promote the Fund and the co-operation of the newspapers throughout the English-speaking world enlisted. It is proposed to hold the ball in the later autumn, and in connection therewith assistance is desired.—Ed.]

MR. CHESTERTON IN BYRON'S DEFENCE.

"WE have dug up Byron again only to do him an injustice again because we do not understand rant and the soul of youth," said Mr. G. K. Chesterton in the diverting and illuminating lecture on "Rhetoric" which he gave as his ex-Presidential address on May 23rd at the Royal Society's Rooms, Burlington House.

Mr. Chesterton, the *Morning Post* reported, said the general peculiarity of the notices about Byron in connection with his centenary seemed to him to be that the critics, who were mostly hostile critics, depended on the one word rhetoric. That use of the word was one of the most mysterious degenerations in the English language. It had become practically a term of depreciation, yet rhetoric was simply Greek for eloquence. That sense of the word covered a legitimate department of poetry. What critics meant when they said that poetry ought not to be rhetorical was that it was not really song. But that seemed to him to narrow the world of poetry.

Probably what the critics meant was that they objected to "rant,"

yet he was prepared to admire it because it was rant. The most youthful poetry in the world seemed to him to be that department of literature which could be summed up in the noble and beautiful title of "rant." The most extraordinary thing about Byron was not his moral muddles, but the fact that he remained to his death very young. He was emphatically a person whose boyish zest never departed. He was, in fact, the very opposite of all he claimed to be.

The reason that the modern critics did not like Byron was because they were not boys. They had not enough of boyishness, and the test was that they could not appreciate rant. A good many modern critics were dead and, if not buried, buriable. Why we of to-day were out of touch with rhetoric he did not know, but it explained why we did not understand Byron. But the spirit of poetical criticism should be more catholic than that. If a man could not answer to the direct clap-trap appeals of driving speech, swagger, and rant in poetry which must be read swiftly, he was dead and buriable.

The President (Mr. W. F. Rawnsley) was in the chair, and Admiral Mark Kerr and the Rev. Dr. J. J. Kirtlan, D.D., vice-presidents, racily commented on Mr. Chesterton's remarks.

* * *

In further commemoration of the Centenary and in honour of Byron's memory a wreath was laid on his statue in Hyde Park by the Treasurer of The Poetry Society, Mr. C. Oscar Gridley, at 11.30 p.m., on April 19th, to synchronise with the firing of a salute by the Fleet at Athens. Mr. Gridley read an ode of Mr. John Drinkwater's and Mr. K. K. Ardaschir spoke briefly on Byron.

* * *

The annual recital by holders of the Silver Medal in competition for the Lady Margaret Gold Medal will be held in London in October. Details may be obtained from the General Secretary.

* * *

An examination of local candidates for the certificate and bronze and silver medals of the Poetry Society will be held at Clifton (Bristol) on July 18th, followed by a lecture on "Eurhythm" by Dr. H. H. Hulbert.

* * *

A luncheon to meet Mrs. Hunt Bartlett, our American Editor and Vice-President, will be given on July 8. Members who wish to attend should communicate with the General Secretary at once.

CHILDREN'S VERSE CONTEST: A REASONED SURVEY, WITH EXAMPLES.

THIS competition has been very interesting, but the Easter holidays have been rather in the way of the school entries. We have decided, therefore, to carry forward a portion of the awards to a later date, when those who have expressed disappointment because they were not able to compete in the present contest will have a further opportunity. Particulars of this second competition will be found at the end of this survey.

The school entries which have been received show, I think, a very good level. We are hoping that the teachers in schools will talk to the children about these competitions, and encourage them to enter. The writing of verse is not only a stimulant to the imagination, but is also a training in form and selection. Above all, it awakens and encourages an interest in poetry, and assists children to appreciate what is good. The teacher's personal attention to poems sent in is greatly to be desired—also, a preliminary weeding-out of the verses would help in many ways, and make the children feel that they must only send in the very best that they can do.

The writing of poetry is, after all, not only an imaginative outlet, but an intellectual effort. In working on it children will learn rhythm and form. An example of form has come in from America, which I shall quote in full by and by, to show the value of such experiments. I wonder if I shall ever receive poems labelled "In Imitation of So-and-so"—taking a classical example and following it. I should be greatly interested if I did.

In examining the verses I have found that those of children under eleven have rather a distinct character; that from eleven to fifteen the writers seem to become more imitative and bookish; and that after fifteen a new sort of treatment appears, as if, at this age, certain ideas had been grasped and certain aspirations arisen. With the Editor's consent, therefore, I have divided the competitors into three groups, instead of the two groups originally arranged for. The awards will be made accordingly.

Among the schoolchildren under eleven years of age the little writers from the Margaret Morris School, London, S.W., come in an "easy first." These children show genuine originality, and their rhythm is invariably good. Annabel Thorp especially has sent in an unusual kind of little poem, written with imagination and simplicity. Annabel Thorp is only nine. Has someone been reading Blake to her, or have these thoughts come to her without any outside influence, I wonder?

ABOUT GOD.

God is in the sun,
He loves everyone,
God is in the sky,
And he'll never die,
God is in the moon,
I'd love to see him soon,
  God is riding high,
  He's always passing by,
God is in the air,
But no one sees him there.

Gisela Schenk, also among the younger ones, is to be commended for her amusing little poem, which I like for its quick movement. Among the elder girls of this school Freda Gaye and Constance Knowles send in good work. The latter has the gift of writing *vers libre* that can really be spoken musically, and I think that her feeling for beautiful words and phrases is very acute. But sometimes she sacrifices truth of observation to this feeling; as, for instance, when she describes a moor of

> "Blue, purple and blue,
> As far as eyes can see on either hand,
> Swayed gently by soft breezes from the sea
> The heather grows, hiding among its roots
> The nests of grouse, the children of the moor."

Now the real charm of those lines is spoilt because the picture is not true. When the heather is in bloom no nests of grouse are in existence. They are never much more than depressions in the ground, filled in spring with lovely richly coloured eggs, and the chicks leave the spot a few hours after hatching. I must not give an ornithological lecture, however! But nature poetry should indeed *be* nature poetry, as Wordsworth's was, or it loses value. It should never be just a musical movement of words. I think young writers like Constance Knowles will have to train their evident imaginations to look at things truthfully, and see the beauty that is *there*, not the beauty that is in their memories of, say, Shelley's poetry. I have a poem before me that speaks of "scarlet fishes"! They would be very decorative if only one knew where to look for them, but I have not seen them yet, even in the new aquarium at the Zoo; and in the case from which I quote they are associated with herons and grey

marshes! Still, a feeling for colour is valuable if rightly used. Freda Gaye (15) is very sound in this respect. She gives us "purple fishes" in a really excellent poem—but she associates them with "whisperings of strange tongues beneath the trees," and they seem as credible as they are beautiful.

I have a poem sent in by a little girl of eight—Mary Parsons—which I like because it shows, I think, that she has really watched and listened to the "Birds" after which her verses are named:

"The song-thrush swells his breast and sings
In the warm air.
He thinks of only pleasant things
When singing there.

The lark flies up into the sky
Singing a song
And soon you bid the lark good-bye,
He stays so long."

Again, she has truthfully noticed the time of blossoming among the flowers:

"—The neat Bluebell is nearly out,
The Daffodil
Is showing glory round about,
With great good-will."

But I think that even at eight years old a child who could write the charming line "Is showing glory round about" should have found a better poetical ending than "With great good-will." I hope that next time she will not bring me to earth with such a thump!

Lorna Gladys Richards (8) sends in *Spring-Time*, which I also commend for the truth of observation. Madeline Gertrude Keir Moilliet (8) writes of the *Cuckoo* with feeling and pleasant movement. Patricia Wells (7) is the youngest contributor, and has sent what is less a poem than a pretty little cadenced apostrophe to *Mother Snow*. This comes from Hamilton House School, Tunbridge Wells. The pupils of this school send in admirable work, especially the elder ones. Betty Green's (16) *Sonnet to Rugby Football* is quite individual:

"First of games! I hasten to thy call,
And in thy glorious technique will become
Expert; and risking dislocated thumb,
And broken nose, and many a nasty fall,

Will live and die a Follower of the Ball.
My speed shall strike the Rugby Union dumb;
"He is the fastest man behind the scrum!"
They cry, while round me news reporters crawl.

* * * *

At stand-off half, I strive with all my might
To cut through the opposing team, and sight
Their touch-line, and to tackle hard and low
—Two points behind, and just five minutes to go!
I score the try! And men say, far and near,
Fine fellow, that! He'll get the Cup next year."

You would not think, after that, that Betty Green could write of a fallen cherry tree that

"there the Redbreast makes his nest,
The sun glows softly from the West,
And dusky night-birds sing to me
About a phantom cherry tree."

But that is what she has succeeded in doing. *The Cherry Tree* is really a much better piece of work than *Rugby Football*, though less original. It is commended for what I can best describe as *atmosphere*.

Margaret Masterman (14) shows spirit and "swing" in the *Song of the Kite*. One really has a sense of the kite going up against the wind. Elizabeth Hill (13) has written of the *Awakening of the Stream* with imagination, but must pay more attention to form. Marjorie Rubeck (15) sends a good but rather artificial *Lament of Rosabelle*; and Rosemary Wibner contributes an interesting poem called *I Thank Thee, Lord*. Her work is ambitious, and would take a high place in this competition were it not so uneven. She chooses good subjects, and writes good individual lines, but does not seem to distinguish between such lines and those of little or no value. It has been difficult to select the best poems from among those sent from this school, for all are above the average.

A budget comes from Skinner's School, Stamford Hill, but the average is rather low, as I think the elder children will see for themselves when they read the poems I have quoted in this survey. Eva Elves (14) sends in a very good piece of work, *The Dream*. It has some charming lines, and plenty of colour in it, but I think it would have been better treated not as a Dream, but a pure fantasy. I like the hermit who bore her

"To broad hills of Afghanistan,
To Persia and Baluchistan,
Where Shahs and Amirs rule in state,
And heads adorn the city gate."

Janet Pickard, who is just on fifteen, has written *A Fantasy* which is *really* fantastical, though her rhythm is not very good. Olga Cowen (12) shows a much better feeling for rhythm in *About Summer in Winter*, as does Phyllis Young (12) in *The Woods*.

From Felixstowe School, Clifton Down, Lucy C. Thomas (14) sends in *Spring Evening*, which has a real touch of imagination:

"The Wood is very silent now,
For all who fear the Day
Are very very quiet folk
About their work and play."

There is the same sort of imagination in *The Phantoms*. Has she been reading Mr. Walter De La Mare? All the pupils of this school show promise, and one is struck by their feeling for the sea. Here is a charming little poem by Marie McLeod Craik (14) called

TELL ME.

"Tell me, pretty cockle shell,
Of your home where mermaids dwell,
Of the seaweed pink and green,
Floating round the Mermaid Queen.
Tell [*me?*] of the mermaids there,
Pretty ones with golden hair.
Have you palaces of shell
In your home where mermaids dwell?
Tell [*me?*] of the sea so green
Foaming o'er your Mermaid Queen.

The writer will see that I have thought sometimes that a beat was missing and have inserted it.

From South Park School, Ilford, comes a little poem from May Hardy (11), called *The Fairies*, which is very light and "dancey." I like

"They danced the toadstools in and out
They danced them round and round about."

I should be glad to receive more work from this school.

I have some good, quite lyrical work from the County School

at Ammanford, Carmarthenshire. In this case the best poems are sent in by children of about thirteen years of age. Doris Luned Griffiths (13) has written a really musical poem called *My Daddy*, supposed to be by a little boy. I will quote two or three verses :

"My Daddy's gone to Moreton Bay,
Over the blue blue sea.
What will he bring for me ?
Oh, say, my dear sister, oh, say !
A gift from sunny Moreton Bay,
Over the blue blue sea.

A song-bird ? Or *some* pretty gift ?
A beautiful ship of gold !
With silver in the hold !
A westerly breeze to make it swift !
It really would be a very rare gift—
A beautiful ship of gold ! "

But Doris Griffiths must learn not to underline words in her poems. In this school Thomas Hugh Bevan (13) has written some lines *To a Lark* which show real nature-feeling.

I come now to Halidon House School, Slough. Margaret Myers (12) sends an amusing "swinging" little poem, *How the Zoo was Founded*, and Mary Glanfield (9) has evidently watched "bunny-rabbits." All the children of this school write with a sort of swing, but I think they will have to be careful to avoid jingle.

Some good individual things come from America—among them what I think is the outstanding poem among all I have received. Dolores M. Petetin (15) sends a *Ballad of an Old Guitar*, which is good, but would have been better if written in true form. But, as I have just said, I do not think I have received anything in the competition so good as Edith Natalia Hoisington's poem, *Moon Magic*, which is really a notable achievement for a girl of fifteen :

"Upon the terrace fair Esclairemonde
Holds up a silver dish to snare the moon ;
Her fairy-lore had granted her this boon
That, when the moon-rays floated like a pond
Converged in silver, far-off minds she conned
And read within the platter as a rune,
Upon the terrace fair Esclairemonde
Holds up a silver dish to snare the moon.

Her lover's mind she lures within a bond ;
Her thoughts are playing on his thoughts a tune
Of love's mysterious ardour. Know that soon
The magic works. For this, with waving wand,
Upon the terrace fair Esclairemonde
Holds up a silver dish to snare the moon."

Edith Hoisington is to be congratulated. I understand that she writes her poems to patterns, making the form first and filling it in afterwards. I think that this would be an admirable exercise for many children, and help them to a *technique* which Edith Hoisington has really achieved. She has evidently a vivid imagination, but unless she were careful of her form, she would never produce so good an effect.

In turning over the verses again I find an interesting poem, *The Execution of Erskine Childers*, by Beryl E. Brett, and a better by the same writer, *Inspiration*. The merit of these poems is their sincerity, but a little more attention to form is needed. I also find a nice little poem, *Never Go, Sky*, from Harmon Hendricks Goldstone.

In making the following awards I should like to say that many other contributions were almost equally good, and that it was really difficult sometimes to choose out, from among them all, the poems to which the prizes are awarded. A first is given collectively to the children under eleven from the Margaret Morris School ; and the same award is made to the girls of fifteen and sixteen from Hamilton House School. Individually the prizes are as follows :

Ages under Eleven.—The premier award goes to Annabel Thorpe. Secondary prizes go to Gisela Schenk and Mary Parsons. Smaller book prizes are awarded to the following children, whose work is commended : Lorna G. Richards, Patricia Wells, Mary Glanfield, Betty Roberts, and Harmon Hendricks Goldstone.

Ages between Eleven and Fifteen.—Doris Luned Griffiths carries off the premier award. Secondary prizes are given to Peggy Murray-Gibbon, Margaret Masterman, Eva Elves, Marie McLeod Craik, Phyllis Young, Lucy C. Thomas, and Thomas H. Bevan. I commend the work of Janet Pickard, Olga Cowen, Margaret Myers, Elizabeth Hill, Ida Arnold, May Hardy, and Kendrick Etheridge, all of whom will receive small book prizes.

Ages Fifteen and Sixteen.—The premier goes to Edith N. Hoisington. Secondary prizes are given to Betty Green, Freda Gaye, Constance Knowles, Marjorie Rubeck, Rosemary Wibner, Edna Cornwell. Phyllis Macdonell's work is commended, and Dolores M. Petetin and Beryl E. Brett are encouraged to continue writing. These three girls are awarded " consolation " prizes.

The book prizes which have been carried forward to a second competition will be increased in number at the adjudicator's discretion, and will again be given in three classes—viz., ages under eleven, ages eleven to fifteen, and ages fifteen and sixteen. Not more than two poems may be submitted by or on behalf of any competitor, and each MS. must bear the name and address of the writer, and an endorsement of authenticity by a parent or teacher, who must be a member of the Poetry Society. School teachers, however, may send in batches of poems by their pupils, and in the event of any large number being received from any particular school or teacher a special additional prize or prizes may be awarded, thus constituting a competition within the major general contest. All MSS. should be addressed to the Children's Verse Editor, Poetry Review, 16, Featherstone Buildings, London, W.C.1, on or before October 31st, 1924. Personal criticism of MSS. can only be given on payment of a fee of 5s. Several poems may be sent by teachers and others for a private opinion for this fee. Any fees thus received will be devoted to the augmentation of the prize fund.

BLANCHE WINDER.

A PRESCRIPTION OF POETRY.

MR. DIMSDALE STOCKER'S address at the Royal Chapel of the Savoy inspired an article in the *Birmingham Post*, in the course of which the writer pointed out :—

" The curative power of poetry was mentioned lately by a speaker at one of the Poetry Society's lectures. The idea is not as far-fetched as it seems. We all know M. Coué's ' Every day in every way,' etc., and it is quite possible that its rhythm has as much to do with its healing power as its statement. That mental steadiness can result from rhythmic physical movement is certain, and there is for many people an absolute need of rhythm in their lives. Perhaps those who make us impatient by insisting on exactly punctual meals and a fixed hour for getting up and going to bed have found their right rhythm, though our own, which takes different curves, so to say, refuses to combine with it. As for poetry, its power over mental states—in certain minds, be it said, for one would as soon think of prescribing prussic acid as poetry for some people—is proved by the not uncommon habit of using it as a sedative. When lying awake at night you may induce sleep sometimes by reciting to your pillow the longest poem you know, though I must admit that the irritation of not being able to remember a particular verse has its dangers."

CITY SONNETS:

LONDON

ROMANCE has set her castle here, where beats
The heart of England; hither no winds blow
But sing of youth; long since the Bells of Bow
Called Whittington; here Milton, Lamb and Keats
Once bowed the knee to her; and he that meets
In some pale dawn that gallant band shall know
Her secret, and why Shakespeare long ago
Left Stratford for the beauty of her streets.

Still when the moth of twilight flutters down
Poets and kings and sages long since dust
Leave Paradise to gather at her gate;
These gave their lives as jewels for her crown,
Left us this London as a holy trust,
Bidding us keep their faith inviolate.

Kensington, W.14. LUCY MALLESON.

NEW YORK

THOU art not London, mother of our race;
Thou art not Rome, madonna of the soul,—
Nay, only one that strives but to control
The world of trade. Yet must thou have high place;
For thou art life, at throbbing, breathless pace.
And what so great as life! Go read his scroll:
Can Shakespeare thrill us as that complex whole,
The life that throbs beneath the meanest face?

Trade hath its beauty, too. Look eastward where,
Through height of glistening masts, ye can descry
The bridge that spans, a rainbow in mid-air,
The past's impossible: of kinship, ay,
With where on Pincian Hill ye sudden stare
Upon Saint Peter's dome far up the sky.

Boston, Mass. MORRIS GREY.

ROME

HAIL Rome, celestial star of Christian light !
That rose, red tinted in thy martyrs' blood ;
A ruby shining clear above the flood
Of Pagan years. And far above the height
Of thine own splendour, is that wond'rous might
Of love that gave thy saints the peace that could
Forgive their tyrants, round them as they stood
With Death, who crown'd their griefs in glory bright.

" O Rome, my country, city of the soul ! "
Thus sang the northern wand'rer—why not I
A wand'rer too. And if our minds can be
Aflame, and burn with kindred thoughts, that roll
From hearts on fire—I will this laurel tie
And join the lofty theme in praise of thee.

Cagliari, Sardegna. E. NOLAN.

CARTHAGE

SOW it with salt where men went to and fro
Lost in their daily maze of common cares ;
Sow it with salt where rose old trodden stairs
To shrines forgotten ; and thrice deeply sow
The wharves whose galleys went as still ships go,
Cruising and trading, offering rich men's wares.
Carthage is dead ; and night-beasts dig their lairs
Where once her turrets pierced the evening's glow. . . .

Words dropped like stars through time's unending space—
Dido and Hannibal, Sidon and Tyre and Spain—
Purple and gold and slaves and ivory—
Only these words are left ; and Dido's face
Of anguish when Æneas sailed again ;
Hannibal's rage ; and Cato's enmity.

San Francisco, Cal. MIRIAM ALLEN DES FORD.

BRUGES

WHAT have I kept of all you gave to me ?
What memory that no iconoclast
Dare touch ? The pictured, living, pensive Past,
Wearing her old dreams so majestically.
Cream-habited, the Carmelite I see,
And dames in classic folds of flowing black,
Boatmen adrift adown a mystic track,
Vows echoes hear of Perpetuity.

These, yes. But one I call from out a room
Of guests immortal in Echantment's dress,
A nun, whose lovely face will sometimes loom,—
Perennial Witchery and Wistfulness,—
Who turned Time's glass behind her grill of Doom,
To give to her dead world one last caress.

Chelsea, S.W. FLORENCE M. BRADFORD.

NEW ORLEANS

MOST things I shall forget, but never these :
Warm, lazy sunlight spilling down the street
In careless, amber pools ; the haunting, sweet
Fragrance of jasmine on the drowsy breeze ;
The crinkling softness of crêpe-myrtle trees ;
Languid, brown water, lapping round the feet
Of tired, old levees, crumbling to their beat,
And moon-flowers, pallid, in a waxen frieze.

Woven into my dreams are Vieux Carree,
Shadowed and dim ; the faded market-place
And streets half-veiled in trailing Spanish moss,
I face the bleakness of a Northern day
Smelling magnolias, while upon my face
The wistful tears unhalted, take their course.

Lakewood, N.J. ELIZABETH R. DILLINGHAM.

SAN SALVADOR

THE grey Pacific beats against the shore,
And hurls and draws bright pebbles on the beach.
High in the hills, beyond the ocean's reach
Where tropic earth presents its lavish store,
The City stands. Tall supple palms wave o'er
The roofs. The square low houses hold in each
An inner court of beauty ; while suns bleach
Their stones, and flood with gold their courtyards' floor.

Though earthquakes rock the square, and crumble walls,
Volcanoes steam by day and glow by night,
Yet is the Market-place forever gay.
Trade falters not ; a ruler rises, falls ;
And life goes on ; and one will dance or fight,
And pause in the Cathedral aisle to pray.

GEORGIANA SIMMONS GITTINGER.
University of Virginia.

SANTA FÉ

SUNSET, Sangre de Christo, Santa Fé ;
A sweet embrance of blood and wine and fire !
In ecstasy I consummate desire—
God did not take the crystal cup away
And so I drank another desert day !
These two made music on my soul's mute lyre ;
A cactus blossom blazing in its pyre,
An arrow-slender Hopi poised to pray.

Swart, sandalled Princess of the Great Plateau,
That lonely lad who fled the White Death's rule
And hides inert upon your beating heart
Dreams not of you, but home, and longs to go
Back to the bayou where the black fish dart.
O heal and free that unforgetful fool.

Colorado, U.S.A. NEITA CAREY.

THE KINGLY LEGEND IN ENGLISH POETRY: I.

CRITICISM of poetry is abundant at the moment—more so, perhaps, than original poetry itself—and this almost restless abundance is, I believe, causing many to approach poetry timidly, uncertain whether to demand satisfaction for their intellectual and philosophical appetites, or merely to look for glamour, enchantment and illusion. Perhaps the last thing for which the modern critic searches in poetry is religion; and yet nearly all the great imaginative poetry of the ancients, from the Psalms of David to the Odyssey of Homer, had its roots in religion. By the word "religion" I do not mean anything parochial, or even dogmatic; I mean the relationship between man and God, between mortal and Immortal, between flesh and soul—the poetry, in short, which springs from man's overwhelming consciousness of the spiritual side of himself.

From this consciousness, and from this consciousness only, can a great living poetry arise. Often such poetry is inextricably bound up with the poetry of battle. We of the early twentieth century have not got hold of this truth—or, if we have got hold of it, we examine it in a mood of anger and revolt. Yet history will not be denied her evidence, and thrusts herself forward as a witness to declare that the horror, the hideousness, the brutality of war has a profoundly spiritual side, and has proved this by leaving behind it everlasting monuments to a nation's ideals, courage, and faith. Unless we keep this knowledge in our minds, we cannot examine what I have called "The Kingly Legend," but might with equal reason have called "The Heroic Legend," with any appreciation, either of its meaning, or of its place in the poetry of the country which is our birthright, and the people of whom we are the direct heirs.

King Arthur, the western chief about whose name so many legends have collected, is, some will tell you, a myth. Others will say that he was a pagan leader of the fifth century, practically unknown until Geoffrey of Monmouth,

the Bishop of St. Asaph, made a Latin book about him in the middle of the eleventh century, and pretended that the materials for this book were brought from Armorica (Brittany) by Gaultier (otherwise Walter Map), Archdeacon of Oxford. This story of Armorican documents was, they will add, a mere invention of the good Welsh bishop, who created the myth of Arthur in order that Celtic history might not take the secondary place which the writers of Norman and Saxon history were inclined to assign to it. Others again (and their theory is to me somewhat fascinating, if rather improbable) will say that Arthur was really Caractacus; and that the fine and gorgeous civilisation which we are accustomed to picture at Arthur's court, and which could not have existed in the castle of a mere Celtic chief, was the civilisation brought from Rome by Caractacus, and had its roots in historical truth. Once more, we shall be told by others that these splendours were only borrowed plumes, and that the Norman writers, who told the story of Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table, dressed up the tales in the *décor* and sentiment of the period, which was a period of magnificence, courtliness and ceremony. To collate all the opinions, let alone to compare and weigh them, would, as anyone who has studied them will tell you, take a lifetime. "Un dédale inextricable" is the description given of the Arthur legend by one of its most enthusiastic students, M. Gaston Paris. But the sentiment of the stories, their poetical value, their close association with national life, may always be studied, and will yield an extraordinary amount of interest and pleasure to anyone whose affection for legend—above all, fairy legend—is something like a child's love of a wonderful story.

For it has always been to poets such as these that the Arthurian cycle has made appeal—the poets who love a wonderful story. Over and over again have such poets dealt with tales of Arthur's knights and ladies, from many an unknown and forgotten troubadour of the Middle Ages to the latest *trouvère* of the twentieth century—Mr. Thomas Hardy. Once again has a poet been moved by the lovely, hopeless, fatal tale of Tristan and Iseult, one of the stories

that will never grow old. But I wonder how many people know that the earliest love story of the Arthurian cycle is believed to be the story not of Tristan and Iseult, not of Lancelot and Guinevere, but of that bold knight and gentle lady who are so often spoken of as the mere types of Tennyson's Victorianism—Geraint and Enid.

The story of Geraint and Enid was not only told in the twelfth century by a Norman court poet, Chrétsien de Troyes, but was also written in almost identical language in an old Welsh book of Celtic tales called *The Red Book of Hergest*, translated by Lady Charlotte Guest in the middle of the last century under the name of *The Mabinogion*. I shall return to a more detailed account of the Geraint and Enid legend presently. For the moment, I want to draw attention to the injustice of certain criticisms of Tennyson, who has been openly accused by those who disparage the Arthur of the Idylls of "taking a pagan chief of indifferent virtues and barbaric traditions and turning him into a nineteenth century gentleman."

Now this criticism of Tennyson is only made by those who know nothing of the history of our national kingly legend. The twelfth century saw the great renascence, or invention if you will, of Arthur, not as a half-savage warrior, but as the civilised champion of Christendom. Geoffrey of Monmouth's book shows him as the defender, not only of Celtic Britain, but of the early Northern Christian Church. He is crowned, at fifteen years of age, by Dubricius, Archbishop of Legions—Tennyson's St. Dubric. "You that have the honour to profess the Christian faith," cries the Archbishop to the king and his knights, "keep fixed in your minds the love which you owe to your country and your fellow-subjects. Do not be afraid to die for their sakes. He who dies for his country is an acceptable sacrifice to God!" Arthur's shield in battle carries the picture of the Virgin—his first act of victory is to restore the beauty of ancient churches. His coronation is a mighty pageant, his followers are chivalrous and holy gentlemen. All this we find in Geoffrey's book; the book in which we may say that the Arthur legend was

first incorporated into the history of the Church. At the same time, its splendour was handed down by word of mouth among the people, and was extolled in the court poetry of the writers of the period.

We perhaps hardly realise to-day, that the twelfth century culture was little less brilliant than the culture of Elizabethan times. On all sides we find records of a great national literature. This literature was not English, but Norman and Celtic, with a mingling of Latin and Saxon. It may nevertheless truly be called national, for it was a living thing at the court, in the churches, and among the tales and ballads of the people. At the court, Walter Map was writing the same stories as those that the Bishop of St. Asaph was setting down in his quiet Welsh see, and that the folk of Wales, Cornwall and Brittany were passing on from lip to lip in narrative and song. This court was the court of that amazing king, Henry II, and of his wife, Eleanor of Aquitaine. A story is told that Henry discovered the tombs of Arthur and Guinevere "between two pyramids" at Glastonbury, and that Arthur was of great stature, while the shoulders of Guinevere were still veiled in her golden hair. Be this as it may, the Arthur cycle of legend was the source of many poems of the period, and was, above all, the inspiration of that sentimental Norman poet, Chrétien de Troyes.

Now Chrétien de Troyes was the poet of the cultured circle which surrounded the Countess Marie of Champagne; and Marie of Champagne was the daughter of Eleanor by her first husband, Louis VII. How much intercourse existed between Marie and her royal mother we do not know; but we do know that Chrétien in his poetry finally partially collaborated with Walter Map, Archdeacon of Oxford, and chaplain to His Majesty King Henry II. The poems of Chrétien de Troyes have affected the whole of the Arthur legend in its relationship to English poetry; and no study of that legend and that relationship can be complete without study of the poems of Chrétien de Troyes.

Of their derivative sources nobody can speak with

certainty. The French critics often declare their belief that all the old Arthur stories had their birth in Brittany, and were carried through a Norman literature into the Welsh form in which they were written in the Red Book of Hergest. Other commentators think that the tales were originally Welsh folk-lore, and were used by Chrétien in the same way that they were used by Geoffrey of Monmouth, Bishop of St. Asaph. All that we really know is that some of the stories of the Mabinogion and the poems of Chrétien are almost exactly alike in substance, though very different in atmosphere. The Welsh tales are fine specimens of simple, beautiful, straightforward folk-lore. Chrétien's poems are analytical, psychological, and almost as descriptive of character as any novel of the present time.

It has indeed been said of Chrétien that he invented the psychological romance. What he probably did invent was the story of Guinevere as we know it to-day. Guinevere, in his poem, the *Roman de la Charrette*, is the apostle and demonstrator of free love. Possibly this Guinevere really had birth in the strange fertile capricious brain of Marie of Champagne, who, with her mother Eleanor, was a most determined feminist. Both these ladies are reported to have held "Courts of Love," at which their chosen *trouvères* sang of love as something wholly romantic and free, untrammelled by any obligation of citizenship. One of the doctrines said to be taught in these exotic courts was that "it is not seemly to love merely with a view to marriage!" Certainly, both Eleanor and Marie were the patronesses of a great movement of literary romance which exalted the love between man and woman above all other raptures, and made the search for such love a knight's most exalted quest. Under the influence of Marie, Chrétien de Troyes wrote the *Roman de la Charrette*, which is in sentiment the exact opposite of the *Erec et Enide*, Chrétien's names for the Geraint and Enid with whom we are familiar.

Often I have wondered whether Chrétien, who, we know, was familiar with classical literature, would, if left

to himself, have liked to treat the story of Guinevere more in the spirit of the story of Helen of Troy. We find, here and there, a curious and striking resemblance between certain scenes in the poem of the Iliad and the poem of the *Roman de la Charrette*. Chrétien's story of Guinevere and Lancelot begins with the abduction of the Queen by Meleagant, son of King Bademagu, a king "who was very scrupulous and particular in his honour." The wicked Meleagant, however, abducts the Queen not for passion, but for bravado; and it is Lancelot, her lover, who goes to the rescue, not Arthur, her husband. Indeed, Arthur remains, in singularly placid fashion, quiet and safe at home. Under the windows of Bademagu's castle a great fight takes place, with Lancelot and Meleagant as the central figures. The Queen and Bademagu look on; and one is irresistibly reminded of Priam and Helen upon the walls of Troy. It is this very reminder that seems to make a small and almost a mean poet of the Norman *trouvère*. Nothing in literature is, to me, more moving than that tragic simple scene in the Iliad when Helen points out her own people, one by one, to the father of Paris; whereas, in the *Roman de la Charrette*, we have sense neither of dignity nor of fatality, but only of a sentiment which seems entirely decadent and false. Guinevere is a singularly unpleasing figure, always desirous of showing her power over Lancelot, who is rather contemptible in his submission to her caprices. Is this, one wonders, the result of Marie's influence over Chrétien? Or had Guinevere always been the type of a treacherous and unfaithful Queen—the Guinevere who is briefly portrayed by Geoffrey of Monmouth? For some reason, Guinevere has never, in the Arthur cycle, held the same place as Iseult. It seems as if this reason might only be discovered in a still earlier folk-lore—as if the original Guinevere had indeed been responsible for the loss of her husband's kingdom, while the original Iseult had been merely the victim of a fateful, hapless love. One associates the latter with Francesca; but the former is never linked in thought with the sorrowful little bride

who fell a victim to her passion for Paolo. Perhaps the true secret of it all is that both Francesca and Iseult were the helpless victims of *first love*. They loved *before* their marriage to someone else; and their love ended in death. But Guinevere had, in many of the romances, loved Arthur first. She had been his Queen, and had reigned over his kingdom with him; her breach of faith was not only as his wife, but as his fellow-sovereign. Such, at least, seems to be the atmosphere which always surrounds Guinevere; and her story was not improved by the handling of Chrétien de Troyes.

It is said that Chrétien wrote a *Tristan and Iseult*, which has been entirely lost. The story is, however, told by one of his contemporaries, Béroul, and was, indeed, known all over the continent. It exists in one of its most beautiful forms in an Icelandic ballad. If Chrétien treated it as charmingly as he treated *Erec et Enide*, one would willingly forgive him the disagreeable *Roman de la Charrette*. He seems to have been deeply stirred by Enid's story, and is as tender to her as Chaucer is to Griselde. Finally, if his compatriots are right in their estimate of the old *trouvère's* spirit, he turned at last, as if in disgust, from the story of love honourable or love dishonourable, to the spiritual beauty of the legend of the Holy Grail.

What was the Holy Grail? Some say that, in true folk-lore, it was the old Celtic "horn or bowl of plenty." Others think it was the *Sang Real*, or *Sangreal*, a holy relic of the Passion of the Cross. In poetry it has been practically accepted as the vision of the chalice used in the Last Supper, which chalice was brought to Britain by Joseph of Arimathea, and so safely hidden that the secret of its depository was never revealed. The story of Joseph of Arimathea has been beautifully told in old Norman poetry. I like best the legend which tells how Joseph made a silver table in imitation of the table used at the Last Supper; and how the Round Table was copied by Merlin from this silver table. For, though I have only referred definitely to Chrétien's and Walter Map's

poetry, many other bards were dealing with the Round Table and the Grail romances, both in Chrétien's day and in the century following.

Speaking generally, one may say that although Arthur's figure has always been that of a great Christian patriot, the later poems moved between the romance of human love and the great spiritual romance of the Quest. The personal combats among the knights and the slaughter of giants have always seemed to me to be more in the way of *décor* than of anything else. The true poetry of the Arthur legend is always the poetry of a high adventure—either the adventure of love or the adventure of battle, or the adventure of the Quest. By degrees the Quest seemed to take the most exalted place in the musings of those who wrote. The knight who was sufficiently pure in heart and in life to be able to look on the Vision of the Holy Grail became the highest type of hero. Hence it came that Perceval and Galahad were exalted above Lancelot, and, in time, above Arthur himself.

BLANCHE WINDER.

THESE THREE

I LOVE the gray of rocks against the sea,
They are jagged words
The carvèd flight of birds.

I love the stars that change from white to red
In breathless yearning heights
A mocking at our foolish lights.

I love the tumultuous sound
Of waves that travel up the shore,
I lie awake and yearn for more and more.

I am inconstant to the rocks and stars and waves,
For I love more the least hidden sign
Of unseen things, these too are mine!

LEIGHTON ROLLINS.

CORONACH

First snow lies upon the hill
While spent with harvest sleeps the shadowed glen
Heartsore from grief, why must I love you still
Whom Silence sunders from the land of men ?
Summer is swift to die now you are dead ;
Even the birds are grown too sad to sing.
Dying, ah ! Why had you to take—everything ?

Sombre ships in harbour laid
Watching in patience when the world goes past
If I could only likewise undismayed
Endure ; and with my stricken soul made fast
Wait patiently till sailing orders come
And then, at length : black Destiny outplayed
Lonely adventuring to sea—undismayed.

Sweet rose blessing our grey wall
Like some child's kiss upon a tired face.
Whilst one by one, the homing shadows fall
About this hearth to find their resting place.
Take heed, my golden rose, the frost is here !
For now both Dark and Day meet in my sight
Always the hours stoop beneath—cloud of night.

When the mists spin round the stooks
Foaming in phantom spate below the moon
Until a drowning earth like heaven looks
Or Beauty stretched unconscious in a swoon,
Inevitable Silence, running down
From far among the stars—a diamond stair
Leads my grim bedfellow to me : stark Despair.

If it were just now and then
You called me ; but I weary day and night
That, even once, you hold me close again,
Immortal anguish of a lost delight !
It seems that thou canst find no breathing space
Oh bitter Longing : passionate as pain
Body and spirit both consumed, and in vain.

Was our love so rare a thing
That adverse, envious forces named a price,
Chose an unguarded way of reckoning
And, ruthless, watched the fires of sacrifice ?
Always we followed where Joy lightly led
Whose footsteps speeding straightway : blind and brave ;
Stopped short so suddenly and soon—at a grave.

Fools maintain that time can cure,
Are then the hidden wounds that cease to bleed
Inevitably healed ? One thing is sure
Time was invented to suit human need.
" To-day " is just a measure made by man
At which Eternity must surely mock.
Do those hours that change our lives—heed the clock ?

Could I weave your laurel wreath
Tuning my sorrow to such splendid songs
That Fame would laugh up in the face of Death
And set your name where it so well belongs.
Then Pride should sign a covenant with Grief
Stilling my bitter, useless murmurings,
Bringing peace at length to the vain beat of wings.

* * * *

But true grief and threnody
Are foes : since Grief is inarticulate,
For breaking hearts make broken melody.
Why must I murmur at a common Fate ?
Only those sing of grief who do not grieve.
Some other life is withered every day
Because— : a soldier went upon his fighting way.

SYBIL GRANT.

SILENCES

THERE are long silences where lost winds blow
Upon these Loma altars of the sun;
And when small winds with seafaring are done,
There are deep paths the feet of evening know.
The sudden stars of evening on tiptoe
As if the wistful dreams of Time had run
Into the night forever, one by one,
Through Loma's lonely violet canyons go.

Past Pio Pico swift ships lift and glide
Into our channel, into port; or far
Inexorably drawn down that old tide
Where Orient stillnesses of temples are
As subtile as sage incense; and as wide
Blown to the sea; and as familiar.

WINIFRED DAVIDSON.

I LOVE

I LOVE the linen cloth spread out
So smooth and white;
The polished silver knives and spoons;
The china plates and blue teacups
That catch the points of light.

I love the mantel with the clock
Above the blaze;
I love the burnished brass and irons,
Made brighter by the firelight glow
All through the winter days.

I love the brown old earthen jug.
Its drooping lips
And curving sides and low, squat form
Are like a lusty negro wench
With hands upon her hips.

I love the crazy crook-backed chair
Beside my door ;
When I sit down in it to work
I wonder who had it before
I got it from the " used goods " store.

LILLITH SHELL.

IN DEFENCE

AND some did hold that our old English tongue
By overusage and the weight of years
Was worn to shreds and tatters, and among
Those rags a man would seek almost in tears
For words that he might use to deck true thought.
And still and ever would he throw away
One soiled word after other, for he sought
Words that no man had ever used to say
Aught that was chaff or had some ugly vein.
O foolish thought ! Words have no proper taint
Save to a mind distorted by some stain.
All words can perfect truth and beauty paint
If he who chooses be an artist true
And speak the tongue his own forefathers knew.

E. M. FRAMPTON.

THE PATH

THERE is a mountain I have only seen
And up its side, like an old lightning scar,
A path twists high past cliffs and sharp ravines
Among gray rocks to the white heights of sky.
Just such a path a stripling might have climbed
To face a dragon,
Or an anchorite
With old hands crossed upon his skeleton breast
To watch the clouds that burn away to ashes
In sinister warning of the Judgment Day.

The path goes up that barren mountain side
And disappears into the unknown sky.

ELIZABETH J. COATSWORTH.

THEN AND NOW

A CRITICISM AND A SUGGESTION.

"Our tongue is most fit to honour poesie, and to be honoured by poesie."—Sir Philip Sidney (1581).

A LOVER of poetry, who receives a large parcel of books of verse with the request to read and pronounce judgment within a given time—and, worse still, a limit of space—is not to be envied. Poetry to be enjoyed should be read at the reader's own pleasure, and without any obligation to classify or summarise. For there is an element of ungraciousness in having to weigh one singer against another, coldly to compare and contrast rival merits or demerits. It is as if the critic were a J.P., and each of the verse writers brought up before him had come under the Elizabethan Statute against rogues and vagabonds! For Good Queen Bess, one of the most popular of our monarchs, and as autocratic as she was popular, not only gave no unemployment pay but was apt even to economise on her seamen who saved England from Spain. And as for such folk as poet-actors (including one William Shakespeare) be it remembered that their only way of escape from vagabond penalties was to be registered in the household of some benevolent nobleman interested in poetry and drama. Nor did My Lord High Admiral's players, My Lord Earl of Leicester's, or My Lord Earl of Oxford's "boys," consider themselves ill-used; for England was "merrie England" then: and those magnificent personages who took poets and players under their protecting wings could and did give a degree of princely encouragement, sympathy, and support which the poet of to-day, unless born under a peculiarly lucky star, may seek in vain through a lifetime among the modern public. There are, nevertheless, resemblances between our own era and Queen Elizabeth's; and now as then we have such a throng of versifiers that it will be for "Time's old daughter Truth" to decide which shall survive, and over how large a number Oblivion shall "scatter her poppy."

John the Hermit and other Poems, by Samuel S. McCurry,

is a feelingly-rendered version of a legend popular throughout the Middle Ages. In *Life's Little Day*, and *Light in Darkness* are some attractive lyrics, all obviously sincere; while *His Life and Love* deserves separate reprinting as a Christmas booklet. In *Olivet* (Elliot Stock) also, Mr. B. G. Ambler's latest poem, there are the clear thoughts, the decisive principles, the courageous spirit, which make "Life the Reality and death the dream." These writers confront life and the world, not with the nervous self-assertiveness of uncertainty, but with the calm of men who, having undergone the baptism of fire, try to give new recruits their own steadfastness.

Others among the group seem as yet wandering in a wilderness. An omnipotent critic might attempt to prophecy which of these will meet with the inspiration which as yet seems lacking in any supreme degree, but a critic should not attempt omnipotence. He too—as a rule—is but man and mortal. If, out of his life-store of reading, thinking, and first-hand experience, he can offer suggestions which may help any writer to a higher ambition, let him do so. If he can direct the public attention to what is noble, that also is legitimate. But "you talk too much; and too little to the purpose," said Queen Elizabeth to the House of Commons; and Her Majesty's short sharp way with politicians made for swift despatch of business. So should it be with critics; and I therefore will go to the point with a frankness the poets must forgive, in that even some seemingly adverse comments are dictated by regard for the history, tradition, and future of our language as expressive of the life of our nation.

In *Newfoundland Verse* of E. J. Pratt, attractively produced by the Ryerson Press, Toronto, *Snowfall on a Battlefield*, *In Memoriam*, *The Hidden Scar*, and *In a Beloved Home* suggest that the writer has the feeling and perception which should eventually make a poet; and few could fail to sympathise with his *Carlo*, the story of a dog that saved the lives of more than ninety people by swimming with a hawser from a sinking ship to the shore. But it takes a great deal of history to make

literature, as Henry James pointed out; and Mr. Pratt, though living in Newfoundland, has not yet come under the charm of the most heroic figure in his own country's record—Sir Humphrey Gilbert, whose mind was so steeped in knowledge of the past, and whose own spirit was so innately poetic, that his ordinary speech spontaneously had the quality of Shakespearian drama. His last words, when in his 50-ton ship the little *Squirrel* he was sinking within sight of the "Golden Hind"—"*Heaven is as near us by sea as by land*"—have become immortal as expressive of the typical British seaman's cheerful calm in the face of death. Equally famous his terse creed: "Give me leave to live and die in this opinion: that he is not worthy to live at all who for fear or danger of death shunneth his country's service and his own honour."* From a region like Newfoundland, our oldest colony, peopled largely by those who "go down to the sea in ships," the critic may reasonably look for a more epic quality of work than Mr. Pratt has yet conceived. This is his first book: in his next we will hope for deeper roots.

As already said, the Elizabethan era and our own are analogous as well as startlingly contrasted. But whereas we have been contemporary with a war as crucial to us, and more world-shaking to this planet, than that in which Drake won for England the mastery of the seas, our men of letters to-day are—with sorrow be it said—less masculine than those of the Elizabethan era. We await our modern Shakespeare so far in vain. And in post-war minor verse there is a tendency to dwell on the unessential and the superficial. Therefore all the more we are disposed to read with interest the drama *Hereward the Wake* (Stockwell), where Mr. C. M. Bennett takes a national theme. His characters are clear and well contrasted; but whether the Saxon champion actually was betrayed through his folly in regard to a worthless woman is another matter; and Alftruda, the treacherous wanton, is the crudest of Mr.

* See *A Pioneer Empire Builder: Sir Humphrey Gilbert*, in *United Empire*, March, 1924.

Bennett's conceptions. His Torfrida, the hero's noble wife, the faithful Saxon servant Martin, (though Martin, by the by, is not a Saxon name), the Norman sergeant, even the plaintive tinker, are real men; and, unlike average pro-Saxon authors, Mr. Bennett admits the greatness of Norman Duke William, our conqueror and reconstructor.

The Ghosts of Parliament, being a Recessional Awaking, by an M.P. (Erskine Macdonald) ran the gauntlet of press criticism on its earlier appearance. Its title was alarming; for the time has long gone by when M.P.'s charmed the House by an opportune application of lines from Virgil or Horace. But the M.P. for Maidstone nevertheless

> dreamed a song of truth and beauty
> That told of knightly men all vowed to duty,

and in *The Garden of Delight* and *To a Dead Friend* he most nearly escapes from "House of Commons form." The piquancy of an M.P. turning poet has attracted sufficient comment already; and few could question the sincerity of Commander Carlyon Bellairs' expressions of feeling. But his poetry is not conspicuous for the laconic sword-bright manner we expect from one who, even though only in pre-war days, served in the R.N. But if Commander Bellairs has been too long an M.P. to have kept the pungent brevity characteristic of a seaman, none can doubt the genuineness of his wish to analyse and understand life. He is thinking aloud to himself in this book, rather than addressing his constituents, and the high seriousness of his thoughts will attract many.

Sincerity and culture appear also in the work of Edward Glyn-Jones (*The Death of Itylus*, Grant Richards, 5s.). The past is his:

> For the ghostly sails are never furled
> And the phantom ship is ever at hand.

There is life in his soul; he is not of those who fly from battle and cry peace where there is no peace; nor would he wish "a calm and strifeless rest beyond the grave."

His mind is constructive; and through "some storied rhyme of an ancient time" he has passed into a realm where

he wins consciousness of the great spiritual pedigree of the poet, the inheritance which may be his simply by the power to appreciate truth, beauty, and the deathlessness of noble tradition. An *Ode to the Imagination* is his most impressive testimony to faith in

> happy dreams that wake anew
> To find the splendour of the dreaming true.

Solemn, reasoned, heartfelt—with brain, spirit, and emotion working in unison—his ode cannot be conveyed through a few lines, and is too long for quotation here though it does not contain in itself a word too much.

Of Mr. Frank Kendon's *Poems and Sonnets* (John Lane) the best lyrics are *The Promise*, *The Immigrant*, *First Love* and the terse *Once*.

> Ebbed hope surgeth
> Glory returneth.
> Love droopeth not;
> Youth dieth never;
> And Once that was ours
> Bideth ever.

The writer of *Finlay* (John Lane), Mr. Herbert Jones, has already been commended by critics for a "graceful flow" and the rather doubtful advantage of "fluency.' Moreover *At the Corner of Mark Lane* shows in him what is too often lacking in modern men of letters, an affection for His Majesty's Navy. Though he employs the word "middy" which is only used by landsmen—seamen say colloquially "snotty" and officially "midshipman," but never "middy"—the poem is sympathetic, so perhaps even "a new-fledged middy" could forgive the writer for so designating him. In *In those days* Mr. Jones introduces us to his favourite horse Coppelia:

> O long grassy lanes between thickets of hazel,
> With vistas renewed as we swung round a bend!
> Where hoofs at a canter were muted on greensward,
> And quickened their beat for the gate at the end:
> A word, and a rush, and a lift, and we cleared it!
> I laughed, and Coppelia curvetted for joy,

And life was a lark, and the air was a chalice,
The woods were a magic—and I was a boy!

He is more in his element depicting the joys of an outdoor life than the significance of death.

Caught up in the hurricane, killed, and flung useless aside—
No honour, no glory, can balance the cost
Of the days and the months and the years they have lost,
No homage of tears and remembrance, no heart-broken pride,

is his very inadequate outlook in his *Dirge* for the fallen in the Great War. This was not the standpoint of the soldiers themselves in our own day;* nor of the heroic spirit in any day; and we cannot resist comparing it with Simonides' epitaph on Leonidas, King of Sparta, and his little army:

Unquenchable glory ye cast round your well-beloved country,
The while round yourselves ye have cast the dusk cloud of death's night;
Yet dying ye died not, for glorious honour doth crown you,
And lead you from Hades' dark house to the light.†

In masculinity, martial spirit, patriotism, dignity and beauty, the advantage is all on the side of the ancient Greek. Because of Mr. Jones's *Pagan*, and his tendency to invest episodic "loves" with a glamour supposed to be Greek, a benevolent autocrat might decree for him six months' exile to some beautiful desert where he could, uninterrupted, study Plato and other of the outstanding Greeks: for the attitude he classifies as typically Greek is suggestive rather of a pre-war French novel. Let us turn to the actual Greeks of the days when Greek manhood was at its most vigorous. "Love," says Empedocles, "is not discoverable by the eye, but only by the soul. Its elements are indeed innate in our mortal constitution, and we give it the names of Joy and Aphrodite; *but in its highest nature no mortal hath fully comprehended it.*"

And hear Plato to the memory of his beloved Stella:—‡

* See *Soldier Poets* (Erskine Macdonald, Ltd.), 2 vols.
† Alma Strettell's translation.
‡ Shelley's translation.

Thou wert the morning star among the living
Ere thy fair light had fled ;
Now, having died, thou art as Hesperus, giving,
New splendour to the dead.

In prose Plato speaks yet more plainly : " Evil is the vulgar lover who loves the body rather than the soul . . . whereas the love of the noble mind is one with the unchanging." And again, " he who loves your soul is the true lover."

Even Francis Thompson wrote an essay to prove paganism incapable of an exalted conception of love ; but as he chose out only such classic writers of the decadent era who would in any age have had weak wills and claimed " strong passions " to excuse their episodic inconsequences, his essay remained unconvincing to readers to whom ancient Greece is yet a living reality and not a dead museum. Mr. Jones has hardly come to his full strength : but his joy in horsemanship leads us to hope that he may be too innately manly to continue in the common present-day literary error of mistaking defective morality for a sign of superior enlightenment. Indeed his poem *Plain Truth* already indicates that the so-called " pagan " fever is practically over.

What is said of him may be said even more emphatically of many other writers of verse of to-day : they are cramped by insufficient familiarity with the wisdom of the ages. And whereas a magnificent mental heritage could be theirs for the asking, they fall too often into lamentation that

Time, and Youth, and Life, and Love, decay ;

and tell us on their own authority that

even Eternity is proved a lie.*

They display griefs " past hope of resurrection, deep and rotten," when actually their discontent with dreary " realism " shows how they carry in themselves the spark of Eternity, and could arise reborn, would they but awaken to what Plato, Plutarch, and our English Elizabethans

* This represents only a mood. The writer contradicts it in his *Once* already quoted (*Poems and Sonnets*, Frank Kendon ; John Lane, 5s.).

show in no uncertain fashion : that art is much more than mere "self-expression" of moods. It is, or was and should be, the ardour to seek, find, and appreciate "that unspeakable and everlasting beauty, to be seen by the eyes of the mind, only cleared by faith."* Listen to "Sir Philip Sidney, the glory of the English nation in his time, . . . the great English Macænas of Vertue, Learning, and Ingenuity."† The poet, he urges, should "strike, pierce," and "possess the sight of the soul." He should be "the right popular philosopher," inculcating the "true doctrine, not of effeminateness, but of notable stirring of courage ; not of abusing man's wit, but of strengthening man's wit." For "under what name soever it cometh forth, or to what immediate end soever it be directed," the "final end" of poetry, learning, and wisdom "is to lead and draw us to as high a perfection as our degenerate souls, made worse by their clay lodgings, can be capable of."‡

This was acceptable criticism and advice to the robust Elizabethans. And shall we, in the twentieth century, sit down contented to be less strenuous champions of that supreme beauty which gives purpose to life, an abiding charm to literature, and to death itself an emancipating majesty ?

E. M. TENISON.

THE PIONEERS

SLOW and slow the wagons go
O'er the plains with neither a tree nor pool,
But their thin path traced through the desert waste
Is the great highway of the coming rule.
The pioneers blaze through the forest ways,
Fearful lest night shall swallow the trails ;
From the dread of the track the wild slinks back
As man, in the image of God, prevails.

ELIZABETH D. PRESTON.

* Sidney, *Defense of Poesie*.

† *Theatrum Poetarum Anglicanorum*. By Edward Philips (Milton's nephew).

‡ *Defense of Poesie*.

HEARD ON THE HIGHWAY

IT happened once that a Seraph alighted on a great wide Highway, along which marched endlessly, from Eternity to Eternity, a countless multitude. Rich folk went with music, poor folk with sighs, soldiers, politicians, artists, mercantile men, clergy, brave men and cowards, swindlers and paupers, saints and prostitutes, an endless and unending stream. And beside the Highway sat two men and a woman. One man had his arms uplifted and was uttering great words.

"Who are you?" demanded the Seraph.

"I am a poet-prophet," was the reply.

"But they do not listen to you," sighed the Seraph. "And you?" he asked the other, who carried a lute.

"I am a poet," he said. Then the Seraph turned to the woman, who, with her eyes closed, leaned her head to a glass bowl in her two hands which she pressed against her ear.

"Do you not see this multitude?" asked the Seraph.

"I am a poetess. I listen to the exquisite throbbings of my own heart. I see and hear little else."

And the Seraph, overcome by amazement, flew heavenward to report on what he had seen and heard.

Now critics are not popularly supposed to reside in heaven, but they do, at times, share in the amazement of the Seraph.

The daughter of Coventry Patmore, albeit her Church claim her to be of the nature of the saints, listened only—in a transcendent manner—to the beatings of her own heart. (*A Daughter of Coventry Patmore:* Longmans, Green & Co.) Her sacred verses are all on the theme of "my heart and God." She inherited, it may be, this self-engrossment from her father, the stricken widower, who, whilst writing of "The Angel in the House," could yet re-marry one year after the departure of that "Angel." The ears of both were pressed to the stethoscope of their emotions. Evelyn Durand also (*Elise Le Beau and Lyrics*

and Sonnets: University of Toronto Press), dwelling beside the multitude, was absorbed in Evelyn Durand. Her very face was, she says, a "life-long torment to her" because it lacked beauty. Did Shakespeare or Milton thus study their own features? Did Lincoln, whose life was an epic, mourn over his rugged countenance? Her verses are strained and unnatural when she stands apart from herself. *The Dramatic Idyll* is entirely unconvincing. *The Judgment of Europe* endeavours to represent a conclave of devils (who chatter mildly like children) and Satan welcoming the Kings and Statesmen who perform his evil desires, and his most jubilant welcome is given to "dear Salisbury." One does not know which most astonishes us—"the frozen face" of England or the inclusion of poor dead Lord Salisbury as an advanced advocate of devilish practices. The rest of the poems, save for some translations, deal with her "tired feet" or various yearnings of her heart. Of course some lines are charming, but the universal soul seems lacking. Another writer, Marjorie Turner, asserts that "Thoughts are gifts from Soul to Soul; They fly on wings of Love." (*Poems*, Marjorie Turner: Morland.) It may be so, but most of the "Thoughts" could be conveyed quite as well by the penny-halfpenny post. And what can Eros think of such messages as "When I am old I shall rest at last where the pink-tipped daisies grow." And surely he cannot fail to be perturbed by "Trust is the Joy of an hour and Faith is a flame which is dead." For what is Love without Joy and Faith? Yet another feminine verse writer says, that "To help the weak and uphold the strong, This was my call," and "Unto the blind I gave new sight, a moving star through the silent night." (*Life and Love*, Barbara Parker: Simpkin, Marshall.) These are proud assertions, and one hurriedly turns the pages to find this help and "new sight." But what possible form of either is conveyed by "I sought for comfort, but I sought in vain, My thoughts lay heavy on my seething brain," or "Here is the dusty corner of my heart, Sweet youth is dead?" And in the end this "moving star" cries out, "Mad, mad was I at

last—and madness brought relief." But what help is there for humanity in dusty corners of the heart, or the relief of madness? No doubt there is a desire for the beautiful in the output of this multitude of slender volumes of verse. There are variously expressed, if somewhat staccato, cries of adoration for Spring (that most unreliable of females), raptures over the song of the Thrush. The Lark, we notice, is now out of count with the slender-volumites. Let us trust they humbly feel that the older poets have incomparably said all that is possible of that small, winged delight. There are "harebells ringing," "wind-stirred branches," "rose flushed clouds" and all the weary old clichés. As for those who ever again moan about the "pale moon" there should be nothing but solitary confinement and a diet of cheese meted out to them.

It must of necessity prove that sometimes less than justice is given to certain poems when dealing with a number of "slender-volumites." *Invention* from *The Secret Night* (Lady (A.) Scott: The Medici Society), has a grim foreboding running through it, and, as a ballad, the last stanza is very good, and yet there is a third line in that stanza that is poor and conversational. Then, also, the question as to whether it is easy to pen religious musings in rhyme is forced upon one's mind; there are so many slender-volumes of religious verses, and the preface writers to these effusions invariably vaunt the poetic power of each author as being "unique" or "pure and fine." Janet Erskine Stuart certainly writes with a far larger outlook than most. She seems to follow little Saint Catherine of Siena, who so loved her fellow-creatures that she desired above all things, above even her own salvation, that sinners should be drawn into the fold. (*Poems*, by Janet Erskine Stuart: Longmans, Green & Co.) The poem on that Saint's prayer is a beautiful and a universal effort. Others, too, from her pen are lofty and mystic. But outbursts of prayer, even though clothed in rhyme, should be kept for the author's individual use. To publish the cry of the soul is immediately to engender

the doubt as to whether that cry is entirely sincere. Francis Thompson tells us that Ignatius Loyola destroyed all his written soul-experiences as being too intimate and sacred for curious eyes to see. The versifying of heart-pangs and soul-pangs would seem to be becoming as usual an occurrence as washing the teeth—only happily the latter is performed in private. Nor is it considered seemly to publish detailed descriptions of so purely personal a matter.

Surely somewhat of a warning is conveyed against a long poem that, on the first page and on the last, bears these ominous words—" songs no heart can understand " ? Now the heart, is a queer organ, and one would not attempt to predicate what it could or could not understand. But without doubt the brain decidedly receives a shock and retires wearied out in unravelling the meaning of *The Sleeping Beauty* (Edith Sitwell: Duckworth & Co.). Why the Emperor of China is dragged in " lying on his bier " except that a rhyme was wanted for " sere " ; or how Malino's " reynard-coloured hair " should seem the " Javanese sunrise " ; or what is meant by " the dark hairiness of bestial skies " ; or " the crude pink stalactites of rain," except an Apache-like delirium and stark colour blindness, it is impossible to say. One or two lines have been quoted and bepraised in the press, such as " Hell is no vastness ; it has naught to keep But little rotting souls and a small sleep." But there is no depth of meaning in this. How does Hell keep a " small sleep ? " Hell, indeed, should be vaster than imagination can conceive if it is to contain all the rotting souls that be-foul heaven and earth with the ugliness of their own imaginations. We would infinitely prefer to see " heaven in a wild flower " than a " hairy bestial sky," whatever such a term may mean. Gladys Echlin (*The Thief and other Poems*, Gladys Echlin: Elvin Matthews) indites two poems to an Anasthetic and one to the recovery of consciousness. A dipsomaniac's visions of snakes and crawling things might next " inspire " the verse-makers, or the ennobling beauty of a dustcart. Who knows ? We may laugh and

disregard such efforts, but the root goes deep to that setting up of abominable things in the Temple of our lives; and Poets should be Priests of beauty and nobleness, else there is no reason for their continued existence.

ARTHUR HOOD.

CROSS ROADS

WHERE two roads meet she waits; her straining eyes
Bent on the far horizon. On one hand
The way winds through a pleasant, smiling land
And Wisdom beckons there. The other lies
Mid realms of troubled splendour: summits rise
In storm-swept purity: Love takes his stand
Upon a chasm's brink. His eyes command
But he keeps silence. Still she waits and sighs.
Since God made man we women thus have stood,
With bursting heart and weary, weary brain
To make that choice which falls to womanhood.
The way of ease or rugged path of pain?
Ah see, her choice is made! Her lips respond
To Love's embrace. She will not look beyond.

E. M. KELLY.

THE TREASURE SHIP

A SHIP stole out to the seas one day,
Laden with childhood joys;
Her decks were crowded with fairy myths,
Her holds with broken toys.

Her treasure chests more precious than gold,
Were deep and broad and wide;
And mother-love filled her silken sails
And kept us side by side.

I cannot think when she sailed away,
Without my knowing how:
She must have crept out between the dawns
Of yesterday and now.

M. THOMLINSON.

MOUNTAINS AT DAWN

LAST night with the sunset's glow
You were passion-tinged,
Golden and glittering,
And your rose-red peaks
Seemed alive . . . aching . . . consumed
With an inward, burning fire.

Now, at the dawn you are lovelier far,
Snow-white, shading to gray,
Pearly, faint-gleaming,
Pure . . . as the soul of the worshipper
Whom the white dawn finds
At prayer.

FLORENCE LEDERER.

THE SWIMMER

AFRAID of you, strong proxy lover—you, God's sea?
I give you my small self ecstatically,
To be caught, held, or buffeted; to rest,
Heart to your heart and breast to billowy breast;
To know on arms and cheeks, on brow and lips the bliss;
The stinging madness of one infinite kiss;
Daring your most exquisite, sweet alarms
In the safe compass of the everlasting arms.

SISTER M. MADELEVA.

COMFORT

BEFORE I breathed, ten million daffodils
Had lightly shaken sunlight from their bells:
Ten thousand burning sunsets over hills
Had faded into mist, illusive spells
Casting o'er countless hearts. A myriad moons
Had hung above the earth, and dusky nights
Had silvered through innumerable Junes:
But I was not, nor dreamed of these delights.
And this shall be my comfort when I grieve
To think of all the beauty that shall be

When I of this dear earth have taken leave,
Perchance to face Oblivion's dread Sea—
That, awful though the void to which I go,
Before has been a time I did not know.

I. M. OLD.

AN INDIAN WEDDING

This poem gives a picture of local customs and has a touch of humour. At such weddings thousands of people are invited and accommodated in "otaks" (tents or outhouses arranged for guests); each otak holds about fifteen people. As a rule each otak is provided with a "*chilum*," that is the great peace pipe, which travels round from mouth to mouth. The women are in otaks apart from the men. Each sex has its own amusements, music, dancing girls, and rich foods—*sherbet* (sweet drinks), *zardah* (a kind of rich sweetmeat), *pillau* (a dish of chicken with rice and all kinds of dried fruit mixed with it). Men and women are in the habit of chewing betel (a leaf) when they have nothing else to eat. They also smoke "*charas*," a kind of opium or hemp, which sends them into pleasant dreams. They all wait for the procession to start; the bridegroom, arrayed in wonderful attire, with flowers and jewels bedecked, is going to ride in a long procession through the village, showing to the folk how beautiful he looks! He is going to bring the bride from her house to his home. This is called "*the bridegroom's ride*." His near relations are lined up, and continually fling money over the bridegroom's head for luck! The money is collected by the beggars. It is charity given to the poor, but it must be flung over the bridegroom's head —otherwise it never will bring luck!

FOURTEEN hundred "chilums"
From the town were sent,
Fourteen hundred only
To the village went.
'Twas a sumptuous wedding there,
Crammed with guests the "otaks" were,
Hardly any room to spare.
Women here, and men apart,
Pleasures, pleasing every heart;
"Sherbet," "Zardah,"* "pillau" treats,
"Gulab" water,† "halva"-sweets,
"Vena"-strains‡ and dancing feats.
Midst the chat and laughter

* Sweetmeats. † Rose-water. ‡ String instrument.

Round the " chilum " went . . .
Fourteen hundred only
From the town were sent.

Thousand scores of people
For a puff did long . . . .
Fourteen hundred " chilums "
For the mighty throng.
For each " otak " one or two,
Men enjoyed a betel chew
Till the " chilum " came in view,
Travelling ever round and round,
Cheering with its bubbling sound,
Sending smoke in teasing curls
Round the rubies and the pearls
Of the pretty dancing girls.
Tempting too the beggar
Midst the mighty throng
Till his vapid palate
For a puff did long.

Draws he now his " charas,"
Waits for bride groom's ride. . . .
But the cunning opiates
Pleasant dreams provide !—
Gay procession starts at last,
Moves with drums and rockets past,
Silver coins the kindred cast.
Half asleep the dreamer sighs :
" When a boy I was, my eyes
Greater wedding feasts did see ;
Once was flung a whole rupee
O'er the bride groom's head to me . . .
Twice as many ' chilums '
Did the town provide."—
Bride arrives . . . . but beggar
Waits for bride groom's ride.

ELSA KAZI

Khairpur Mirs.

THE DYNAMICS OF AMERICAN POETRY—V

NELLIE BURGETT MILLER, STANTON A. COBLENTZ, MARGARET WIDDEMER, BELLAMAN, MADELEVA.

NELLIE BURGETT MILLER is the poet laureate of Colorado, author of *Garden Year Book* (published by Vollands), *A Study of the Drama*, covering the history of drama from Greek Tragedy to contemporary movements, accepted by the Century Company for Fall publication, and a book of verse entitled *In Earthern Bowls*. Mrs. Miller writes me the following interesting paragraph: "I have been gratified at the attention which our recent contest 'What Two Million Women Want from the Publishers' has received from the publishers. It is a crusade for better books and an effort to determine the place of the club women in the reading public. I count it my greatest contribution to the literature division of the General Federation."

Mrs. Miller has written in *The Flame of God* (E. P. Dutton) a persuasive and lovable book. In it, again, is envisaged for us the life of the Spirit as a thing not apart, and Mrs. Miller seems to give a sharper emphasis to the oft reiterated affirmation that it is within the easy reach of all who would truly possess it. Surely this evidence, necessarily personal, cannot be too frequent.

To quote from a passage in the poem will be the best means to give, in Mrs. Miller's own words, the key to her volume:

> "But there were those who stood silent before the jewel there and mused, then crept away with joy, because, they said, a wondrous thing gleamed from the jewel's changing heart. None could say just what he found, for unto each the many-sided stone gave out a different ray, but all agreed that earth grew fairer and the heaven-land more near and sure within its light."

Mrs. Miller stresses the value of heredity in her sentence:

"To the child born of generations of pure living and high thinking, such thoughts are natural and probably very frequent . . . to quote from an old scrap-book a bit of anonymous verse :

> Only sometimes we lie
> Where autumn sunshine streams like purple wine
> Through dusky branches, gazing on the sky ;
> And shadowy dreams divine
> Our troubled hearts invest
> With the faint fantasy of utter rest—
> And for one moment we
> Hear the long wave-roll of the infinite sea."

The second chapter of the book is especially appealing. In it Mrs. Miller points out the close line between "Spiritual awareness," to use her own expression, and the creative genius as expressed in the arts and especially poetry. " Music has its religious emotion, art its spiritual appeal, and the rhythmic ebb and flow of poetry seems an echo of that greater harmony of tides and suns. . . . The poet is but a human instrument, more delicately attuned, played upon alternately by the airs of heavenly harmony and the harsh winds of human passions. . . . We have had poets who deliberately closed their earthward looking windows and became mystics and seers like Dante : some content to find God in the service of men as the soldier poet Lee Wilson Dodd. . . . Tennyson left two lines which brought God infinitely nearer to the lives of men, and had he left nothing more than these, countless souls, agonising, denying, pleading for some assurance, would proclaim his greatness :

> Speak to Him, thou, for He hears, and spirit with spirit can meet,
> Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet.

Browning, with his triumphant faith and his analytical mind, argues for us the process by which a soul contacts the realms of spirit while still bound by the cords of flesh to earthly use."

Citing poets of a still nearer day the writer speaks of Corine Roosevelt Robinson, George Sterling, Joachim

Miller, Charles Hanson Towne, Harry Kemp, and says: "They transmute into strains of triumphant faith those vague longings for something more eternal that the senses reveal; . . . and never a poet of undoubted genius comes to our attention but we search hopefully through his songs to find the stir of an angel's wing."

The last half of the book concerns itself with the query: "Does the Holy Spirit govern and inspire the lives of men to-day according to the original promise?" Mrs. Miller is avowedly a believer that this is the case and her book has a message of conviction and is a veritable tonic for the despairing!

* * *

Those who have been privileged to read Stanton A. Coblentz's thoughtful reviews reach with confident interest for his book, *The Thinker, and Other Poems* (Wm. T. White and Co.). From the leading poem, from which the book receives its name, to the last, the ninety-two poems vie with each other in compelling the mind to meditation over the deeper phases of life, the philosophy of its realities and ephemeralities, interpreted by a high-minded philosopher. Selection is difficult, and I was thankful that Mr. Coblentz aided in the selection by stating his preferences, as follows:

"Your plan to allow the author to say word regarding his own work appeals to me as excellent—especially since reviewers in general seem to be surprisingly apt in overlooking the writer's favourites. With reference to my own work, I might say that *The Conclave of the Universe* has always been one of my favourites, although it has had a peculiarly varied effect upon others; and I am inclined to esteem *Diverse Gods*, *Why*, *An Unbodied Spirit Speaks*, and *More Worlds to Conquer* above the general run of my work. In a mood perhaps less poetic but certainly more ironic I might also mention *The Mole*, which represents but one of series of fables in verse."

In the *Conclave of the Universe* Mr. Coblentz gives us a poetic interpretation of the finite mind seeking to grasp the cosmogony of the universe, with its hundreds of millions of stars, each a sun, no doubt with planets revolving around them, and all drifting through space as parts of constella-

tions, from unknown origin to unknown destinations, obeying unknown laws. We reproduce it in full :

Far in the deeps of sidereal distance, far where the suns by the million are flying,
Planets are whirling and comets careering, nebulæ swirling in cosmos of light,
Once from the corners of infinite vastness floated together the spirits undying
Wafted from billions of creatures departing from billions of worlds that revolved through the night.

One from each planet, its greatest and wisest, one out of all that had lived in all ages,
Joined that assemblage of spirits convening far at the uttermost border of space.
Lone they debated, for laws universal, problems eternal were probed by those sages,
Secrets of life and the struggle it wages, riddles of death and of time and of place.

" Suns by the cluster, and clusters of clusters are blazing about us," the spirits were saying,
" Galaxies bright whose unthinkable vastness is yet in the cosmos unthinkably small,
Myriad worlds with a myriad creatures, loving and hoping and toiling and slaying,
Battling to live and replendish their species—what is the reason, the goal of it all ? "

Sadly a murmur rose from Orion, " Long have we sought, and the gloom is unsounded " ;
Sadly from Vega, and soft from Polaris, voices were calling, " We seek but in vain " ;
One from Capella was sighing " No answer ! " and one from Arcturus, " The night is unbounded ! "
Souls from the Pleiades muttered astounded, " The darkness can never be cloven in twain ! "
All being helpless to solve the enigma, all flitted back to the realm whence they parted,
Wisest of all of the infinite billions of beings residing in infinite space.

Still, as forever, the comets went roving, planets gyrated and meteors darted,
Suns, as the sands that are tossed on the storm-wind whirled through the void in anarchical race.

Being privileged to choose, I select the sonnet *Friendship* as an example of Mr. Coblentz's poetic treatment of the subject of relationship :

Oh, why do friends, like meteors of the dark,
Gleam to the sight, then go some hidden way ?—
Like lingering music cheer us for a day,
Then vanish swiftly as a chance remark ?
Down midnight streams of silence some embark,
Where all must follow after brief delay ;
Across wide mountain ranges other stray,
Comrades we loved, lost like a rocket spark !

O golden friendship, garnered for an hour,
Then snatched away—a petal on the wind,—
Your ruin is the fading of a flower
Whose perfume lingers echo-like behind,
And softly blowing, fills a fragrant bower,
A garden spot in some remembering mind !

* * *

Margaret Widdemer is difficult to review in limited space. Since her girlhood poem *The Factories* introduced her to her admiring public her facile pen has produced many books, among them *The Rose-Garden Husband* (1915) ; *Winona of the Camp Fire* (1915) ; *Factories, With Other Lyrics* (1915) ; *Why Not ?* (1915) ; *The Wishing Ring Man* (1917) ; *Winona of Camp Koronya* (1917) ; *Winona's War Farm* (1918) ; *The Old Road to Paradise* (1918) (awarded, with Carl Landburg, the Pulitzer Prize) ; *You're Only Young Once* (1918) ; *The Board Walk* (1919) ; *I've Married Marjory* (1920) ; *The Year of Delight* (1921) ; *Cross Currents* (1921) ; *A Tree with a Bird In It* (1922) ; and hundreds of poems, short stories and essays published in magazines and newspapers.

Meeting her happily often, I have had the pleasure of hearing her read her own poems, always enjoyable, due to

her charming voice and delightful personality. Out of such a wealth of poetic expressions Miss Widdemer prefers the poems mentioned in the following note :—

"I consider *Factories* and *Under Dusky Laurel Leaf* (Greek Folk Song) the best two poems in *Factories*, *The Old Road to Paradise* and *The Dark Cavalier* in the book called *The Old Road to Paradise*, and *Barter* and—well, either *The Torch* or *The Breaking* in *Cross Currents*."

A glimpse of her busy life is revealed by another paragraph :

"I am rushing off to Philadelphia overnight, to read, and trying to finish my last novel before that—rather, revise it—so this is a hurried note. I fancy you are rushing more than I !"

The *Dark Cavalier* follows :

I am the Dark Cavalier ; I am the Last Lover :
My arms shall welcome you when other arms are tired ;
I stand to wait for you, patient in the darkness,
Offering forgetfulness of all that you desired.

I ask no merriment, no pretense of gladness,
I can love heavy lids and lips without their rose ;
Though you are sorrowful you will not weary me ;
I will not go from you when all the tired world goes.

I am the Dark Cavalier ; I am the Last Lover ;
I promise faithfulness no other lips may keep ;
Safe in my bridal place, comforted by darkness,
You shall lie happily, smiling in your sleep.

A stanza from *The Breaking :*

We were weary of the petty changeless round,
Of the foolish things wherein life ended, life began,
Of all the laws wherewith our lives were bound,
In rising, in toiling, and in sleeping,
And we remembered an old forbidden altar
And we called on Pan :
Pan ! Pan ! Pan !
God of wild freedom ! God of woodland riot !

Breaker of shackles ! Deliverer from ordered days !
Pan of careless laughter, goat-footed, forgetful !
Pan, come from thy hiding ! Pan, wake to our praise !

From *A Tree with a Bird In It* (Harcourt, Brace & Co.) I quote the following in a lighter mood :

Edith M. Thomas (she tells a friend in confidence, after she is safely out of it all).

FROST AND SANDBURG TO-NIGHT

Apple green bird on a wooden bough,
And the brazen sound of a long, loud row,
And " Child, take the train, but mind what you do—
Frost, to-night, and Sandburg too ! "

Then I sally forth, half wild, half cowed,
Till I come to the surging, impervious crowd,
The wine-filled, the temperance, the sober, the pied,
The Poets that cover the countryside !

The Poets I never would meet till to-night !
A gleam of their eyes in the fading light,
And I took them all in—the enormous throng—
And with one great bound I bolted along.

* * *

When a musician writes poetry you look for his music, though subconsciously feeling that the two are synonymous. But as *The Poet* expressed it :

" Music, when combined with a pleasurable idea, is poetry ; music without the idea is simply music ; the idea without the music is prose from its very definiteness."

On the other hand Poe held that

Music resembles poetry ; in each
Are nameless graces which no methods teach,
And which a master hand alone can reach.

I was reminded of this in reviewing Henry Bellaman's book *Cups of Illusion* (Houghton, Mifflin Co.), and on writing

him I received this analysis of the musical structure of his book:

"You will notice when you prepare to review it that about one third of the poems are in regular metrical forms—sonnets, etc. The *Sonnetino*, at the close of the book is a form which I invented for the swift etching of portraits. As its name implied, it is a small sonnet.

"Many of the poems that seem free are a highly organised free verse with a definitely shaped form beneath. Two or three are metrical but printed as free verse for æsthetic reasons. I fancy my writing in the future will, as in the past, divide about evenly in free and conventional forms.

"I wish I could make clear to critics that *form* derives from subject and that the jog trot of many meters in use are a torture to the highly trained ear. I am a musician, and I have used in writing poetry many devices, rhythmic, formal, etc., the very devices that you accept without question when you go to a symphony concert. I am sending you a copy of the article on æsthetics under separate cover.

"Few poets have gone into the subject. Few have the equipment to do so. But I do wish to make it clear that I have a definite æsthetic and that my procedure is never haphazard. Take the poem *Gargoyles*, for example—it is a poetic application of the rondo form from music. It is actually metrical and the most formal poem in the book. Yet it appears as free verse because there is no other name for it. The name should not matter, anyway.

"The poem *Homesickness*, which was printed in the *Century* and included in Moult's *English Anthology*, is a highly formalised poem. There is a cadential formula of 13 : 3 : 13 : 3 : 7 : 3 which divides the poem in three parts after the old pattern for a sermon! How many critics will see that, do you suppose? And it was after all not studied out that way. I did alter some of the material to formalise it after I saw the form into which it was going to fall."

GARGOYLE OF NOTRE DAME

I watch them shuttle and weave and run
Like dust before a wind:
Boats on the water,
Leaves on the bank,
And men on the streets and square.
Leaves and snow and leaves again,

And men.
Boats to the sea,
Leaves to the wind,
Men to gibbet and wheel—
To thrones,
To bed,
To Père Lachaise.
Muddy tracks in the snow,
And blood on the wheel,
And rotting leaves on the tiles—
The wind and rain will sweep them away
As a soft curled plume might sweep
Flecks from a silken gown.

Shuttle and weave and run—
Boats to the sea,
Leaves to the wind
And men to Père Lachaise.

HOMESICKNESS

There is a place so far away,
almost it seems never to have been.
There are dull rocks
and the brown flanks of barren hills.
There a listless stream
waits in the shallows
nor desires the sea.
Old walls are rooted deep,
and gaunt houses sit upon their haunches
like starved animals—
sometimes their hollow windows
show a wolfish gleam
in the heavy dark.

But I am kin to it.
The old wife hills—
I am close kin to them.

. . . . . .

Here the cloudy light
circles on crystalline peaks,
and the soft fall of satin petals

stirs wide eddies of perfume
in the emerald pools
of walled gardens.
Here the delicate accent
of bright waters,
and the cadenced music
of a gentle tongue
float upon the air
and curl into silence
as quiet sunlight
fades in deep rivers.

The grapes have purpled many times
against that wall.
I know the fountain's legend now
by heart;
the story of this gracious land
is told.

. . . . . .

Those harsh, time-eaten hills,
like peasant women, stooped and shawled,
they crouch as though to warm themselves
together,
and wait, as peasant women wait,
for their own sons.

I must go back to them—
I must go back!

A stanza from *Pause*, one of Bellaman's favorites, further illustrates this musician-poet's avowed motif:

The wind blows to-night
as though you had not been:
It goes somewhere,
knowing eagerness,
and quest.

* * *

The poems of Sister M. Madeleva, of the Congregation of the Holy Cross, published in magazines (including THE POETRY REVIEW) and in the book *Knights Errant* (D. Appleton Co.), have been a contributing force toward sympathetic beauty in the dynamics of American poetry.

In my first reading of the book I noted as my preferences *The Light*, *Surrender* and *The Poet's House*, especially the first:

> You do not know; you cannot, cannot guess
> Across what burning sands I came to you;
> Over what difficult hills, upon what new
> Hard ways of loneliness.
>
> You did not think of gifts—my piteous three;
> Worthy I thought them—kings had such of old—,
> Do you keep but the frankincense and gold,
> And leave the myrrh to me.
>
> Bid me, I will return into the night;
> Remember only, you who merciful are,
> I found you by the shining of a star,
> So must I walk forever in its light.

Sister Madeleva's favorites are two others, as will be noted in her letter:

"Among the verses in *Knights Errant* I care most for the title poem, *A Song for a Man*, and *David*. However, I think that I am an impartial mother to these bits of song, and regard them rather in terms of difference than of better or best.

"This method by which you undertake to introduce American writers to the world of poetry lovers is an interesting one, to say the least. It gives the poet a bit of a chance to direct the tastes of his or her readers. However, I feel that is a very difficult thing for the writer to judge his own work; he is hampered by a host of personal elements of which the public is forever unconscious. And it is the public, after all, that does the reading."

A Song for a Man and *David* follow:

> You, man, have a home and a wife and a child; what song do you
> sing?
> I have a mate on her nest with a little blue egg under each gray wing,
> And for joy of this thing
> I sing,
> Sing to my brooding bird-wife of the skies above her,
> Sing of the birdlings now soon to awake 'neath the soft breast of her,

Sing at the dawn, at the dusk that I love her, I love her!
A bird on a nest with a little blue egg under each gray wing
Is a simple thing;
For the heart of a woman, the soul of a child, O man, what rapturous
song do you sing?

DAVID

Speak, young boy of God;
When blossoms the predilect flower of Jesse's quick rod?
Out of Saba when come those grave kings by a light
Newborn to the night?
The mountains of Juda, when leap they with laughter and mirth
At a Bethlehem birth?
Speak, David, child-seer of earth and of sky;
The time, is it nigh?

A flower of Jesse, a shepherd you are,
A king, a star,
A song to the glory of God, and a singer who thrills
All the Judean hills.
These signs, are they met and embraced and come true,
Or frustrate in you?

Nay, the root and the rod and the bud have their use and their
hour,
But Christ is the Flower.
A shepherd but not to be led to the slaughter am I,
To bleed and to die;
A king who the robe of a fool and the thorn crown has known
In vision alone;
A singer whose heart must cry out through the joy of his son,
"How long, Lord,—how long?"
A watcher who looks through the mist over Bethlehem's hills
for a thousand slow years,—
A mist that is tears.

Of The Poetry Review Sister Madeleva speaks in praise:

"I have read it with enthusiasm, much profit and delight. It seems to me the best exponent of poetry and poetic aspirations that we have to-day. Its scholarship, discrimination, and depth are tremendously satisfying. I have met genuine intellectual joy on every page."

OLD WINE IN NEW BOTTLES.

PROFESSOR GILBERT MURRAY never fails to capture more than our ear and our understanding. He captures our finer senses, even as he himself has been caught by the spirit of the Great Greeks. His introduction to the *Rhesus* (Allen & Unwin, 2s.) is as interesting to the mere reader as it is helpful to the student, and the play itself, in spite of the many controversies as to its true authorship, is treated confidently as belonging to Euripedes and to no other. It may not appeal to the emotions like the *Trojan Women*, nor does it possess the tragic intensity of *Medea* and *Electra*, but it contains some vividly contrasted characters. . . . Hector, noble of heart and bearing. . . . Ulysses, full of craft and cunning. . . . Dolon, the ambitious, crawling away in his wolf's disguise to meet a wolf's fate. . . . and King Rhesus, Troy's long delayed ally, doomed never to strike a blow in her defence.

Mr. C. D. Locock has selected from the *Odyssey* most of the famous and favourite passages (Allen & Unwin, 3s. 6d.). He does not attempt the heroic couplet and "grand style" of Pope; and while he does not attain to the animation and energy of that poet and his auxiliaries, his simple diction and smooth metre are pleasing and perhaps to some more easily read.

Mr. F. A. Wright has, on the other hand, attempted and achieved unusual things, not altogether successfully. Let us weigh his merits before his demerits. These Broadway Translations are excellently appointed, with apt quotations dropped upon the title page and cover (Routledge, 7s. 6d.), and I doubt if anyone could devise a more fitting title for the Love Poems of the Palatine Anthology than *The Girdle of Aphrodite*. Mr. Wright is careful to inform us that each volume is supplied with an introduction, and in these prefaces, to my mind, lies the chief value of the books. The introduction to *The Girdle* gives the history of the Greek Anthology, some knowledge of the poets represented, an analysis of the passion that inspired them, and an account of other translations. The *Ars Amatoria* is also supplied with a lucid description of Ovid and the reasons for his exile, with a sympathetic insight into the social and moral conditions prevailing in Rome at that time. But the translations themselves are disconcerting. Ovid may have been a "modern" in his own time, and something of a wit and a wag, but to have his somewhat questionable advice to lovers garbed in the slang of to-day is surely carrying literalness too far, especially in such phrases as :—

"Wine warms the cockles of the heart" . . .

"I don't on Clio's help rely" . . .

"If crepe-de-chine her shape displays,
Then murmur 'I am all ablaze.'"

"I hope, my dear, you won't be chilly" . . .

"See how she wolfs the beef and mutton." . . .

Could we not have had the humour and the raciness of Ovid with yet the Roman flavour? The metre is sustained with remarkable ease and fluency even when the rhymes are deliberately forced. . .

Then the Love Poems. A few retain their native atmosphere, conspicuously Meleager's *Love for Sale*, Rufinus' *Charito* and *Boopis*, *The Dilemma* of Antiphilus, *Love's Shipwreck* by Philodemus, and *The Wedding Veil* of Agathias. Others again are spoiled by the ultra modern interpretation. Can you imagine this being preserved in an Anthology for hundreds of years?

The Virago (Palladas).

Her father, he was Battling Fred,
Her mother, slap-dash Moll,
So it's no wonder, now you're wed,
You've found your match in Poll;
A knock-out's sure for you, my boy,
Each time at home you meet her;
You'd best a fancy man employ
To beat your husband-beater!

No! I feel that Mr. Wright is undoubtedly clever, but he would do far better if he took himself and his originals more seriously, for he has taste and touch where he cares to use them and a well filled vocabulary. E. B.

JAPANESE POETRY.

JAPANESE legend has given us the Takarabune or "Treasure Ship" of the Shichi Fuku Jin, or seven Gods of Fortune. The Takaramono—a wonderful collection of objects endowed with emblematical meaning—was its cargo and included among other things the Hat of Invisibility, a purse of money, quite inexhaustible; the sacred keys of the Godown of the Gods, and scrolls of books.

Mr. Page's book on *Japanese Poetry* (Houghton Mifflin and Co.) convinces one that through the bamboo-measured ages, Japanese poetry has been a flowering of the heart into the delicacy of fragile and beautiful blooms—a breath and they are gone!

The inferential lines of these Japanese artists who deal in poetry—and poetry but of the higher emotions, have a hold and an appeal which grows with study and study they must have or pass but as something foreign and perhaps unfathomable to the mind of the Occidental. Hours spent in the study of Mr. Page's fascinating book will yield a harvest well worth the gathering—a beautiful book " to have and to hold," in a becoming dress and deservedly richly illustrated with exquisite colour plates. The chapters teem with suggestion and the fragrance of the " land of the rising sun ! "

Quoting from his preface: " it makes no pretence to thoroughness, scholarship or nicely balanced proportion in its treatment of different periods and authors. It may serve as an outline sketch, the first in English or so far as I know, in any Occidental language toward such a history."

One is struck in reading this study by the definiteness of the poetical persuasion of a people who over a period of 14 centuries demanded worshipfully the peculiar stanza which has been the chief form of Japanese poetry and is still so to-day.

Consider a condition so static that the same verse forms have obtained and held the major place in the popularity of their readers and writers these hundreds of years.

Mr. Page makes one realise that poetry in Japan seems to have been one of the Decorative Sports of the Emperors and the Empresses and was constantly controlled through an effective and efficient Bureau of Poetry.

The many enchanting poems herein given make it a valuable book in any poetry-library. As for instance :

The bell that biddeth all men sleep
Maketh me wake, and keep,
My prince, for thee,
Vigils of memory.

* * *

Wistaria pours at last its waves of bloom
Along the lintel of my door . . .
Planted long since for joy when one should come
Who comes no more.

* * *

This life—a vision of the Seeing Mind :
White sails, far out, catching the light at dawn,
Glimpsed for a moment, then forever gone
Leaving no trace behind.

The trees are heavy with thick falling snow—
How can the nightingale still triumph so ?
She sees, in her impassioned carolling,
The trees thick-hung with blossoms of the Spring,
The ground all-strewn with plum-flowers in the Spring.

The long poem Mr. Page points out, is a rarity in Japan "In this connection it may be interesting to recall the dictum of Poe that no poem should—that is, no real poem can—be much longer than one hundred lines. Since the Japanese lines average only six syllables, a Japanese poem of a hundred and forty-nine lines is a good bit shorter than an English one of a hundred lines. The Japanese long poem, the *naga-uta*, keeps well within the limit suggested by Poe, and is usually about the length of the English sonnet."

Mr. Page analyses and dissects the form and structure of the verse of Japan for us until we begin to feel on the best of terms with it and its trenchant brevity. "Hard drinking and the long poem," Mr Page says, "are taboo . . . more often a mental symbol than a thought . . . Always in poetry they unburdened their souls!" After all, we are constrained to ask, what else is poetry for ?

Absorbing are the personal portraits of Japan's most famous poets from Basho to the present geniuses, among them Tetsukan Yosano, and his wife Aki-ko, who is perhaps the most gifted recent poetess. They have both written verse in the "new style" but they use the tanka form more than any other form. The Rok-kasen, or Six Poetical Geniuses of the ninth century are, of course, included : Ariwara no Narihira, Sojo Henjo, Ono no Komachi, Kisen boshi, Otomo no Kuronushi, Fumiya no Yasuhide.

I am impelled to quote a few more of these lovely lines, which even in translation lose not their charm.

Two things cannot alter,
Since Time was, nor to-day :
The flowing of water ;
And Love's strange sweet way.

* * *

If only noiseless they would go,
The herons flying by
Were but a line of snow
Across the sky.

* * *

All things that seem
Are but
One dreamer's dream.

Some one has said poetry is the father of all art. One might be tempted to reflect upon this in the case of Japan, where poetry is so universal and the poets so highly esteemed. Artists and craftsmen have been inspired by their writings. The crow, the hototogisu ; the flower tossed by the wind and the swaying bamboo bent before the storm : the wild-goose homing before the rain, and the familiar faces of the Gods themselves ; do we not see them realised in the laquer of Korin : the sword ornaments of the Goto and the Hamano masters ? Even the tsuba of the Miochin, deftly wrought in iron carry their reflection of the silken fabric of the poet's fancy. Mr. Page has given us a new " Treasure Ship " freighted with a Takaramono worthy of the keys of the Godown of the Gods. It should have a long and successful voyage !

ALICE HUNT BARTLETT.

INTRODUCTIONS TO POETRY.

A Book of English Prosody, by Sidney Grew (Grant Richards, 6s.), takes a high place among the multitude of books on prosody which have recently appeared, and should be taken into account with the other similar volumes we have noticed recently. That is probably because Mr. Grew is both an elocutionist and a musician. The muddled thinking of the prefatory remark—probably written last—has no noticeable counterpart in the book itself. It will not be ungenerous, perhaps, to mention a few small faults, avoidable in any further edition ; some of the verse quoted has only an historical value, if that ; he says *poetry* when he means verse, using *prose* as the antonym ; the frequent and complacent use of the first personal pronoun is irritating, and *minus* does *not* mean *lacking* or *absent.* Finally, he does not make it sufficiently clear that the old verse-forms are patterns, not fundamental laws.

A Popular History of English Poetry, by T. Earle Welby (Philpot, 5s.), is one of those rare books to which a reviewer can only give unstinted praise. It will prove of inestimable value to all those uninformed and partially informed lovers of poetry whose name is Legion. It is a guide whereby Everyman may make his own anthology. It is the most readable summary I have encountered ; there is no feverish haste ; yet the ground is covered. Its concise judgments are keen and true : " Leigh Hunt's extremely uncertain taste . . . " " As a lyrist, he " (Southey) " was nothing. . . " " Collins is really the poet of one poem only. . . ."

Of course, these quotations do not do any justice to the luminous comparison and correlation which bind the book into its harmonious

whole and make it valuable even to the literary connoisseur. There is no sentence passed without a due weighing of evidence and a summing-up. The chapter on "The Beginnings," necessarily so different from the rest of the book, should also prove fascinating. The readers to whom the book is primarily addressed would be greatly helped by an alphabetical name-index. The synoptic chapter-headings do not altogether meet this want.

O. C. de C. E.

* * *

Bruce Weitick, associate professor at Illinois, has published his lectures on American poets under the title of *From Whitman to Sandburg in American Poetry* (Macmillan, 9s.). The feature of the book is the author's obsession with Whitman, for throughout he uses him as a prototype, compelling all the other American poets to conform to his oddity and unique style of expression. Truly Whitman is the most distinctive American poet of the nineteenth century, but does this entitle him also to be called the greatest American poet ? Whitman was essentially American. His writings could not have been written by any one of another nation. He is the typical American poet, but true greatness lies in international popularity and appeal. Why was not Longfellow or Poe or Bryant or Lowell chosen for a standard ? All these have succeeded on more conventional lines which have a world-wide appeal, and who can say that Whitman was greater because he was distinctive ? A man may achieve distinction, but it must be coupled with conventionality to make his writings live for ever in the minds of men. We can understand how a man like the author, who could devote seven pages to Robert Frost and entirely neglect the New York columnists as Morley and Don Marquis, barely mentioning Schaufler and Markham, could consider that Walt Whitman was the greatest American poet, by whom all others must be assessed.

* * *

Mr. W. S. Godfrey's *Songs of Sorrow* will be sincerely appreciated by fellow-mourners. They are the poignant expression of experience and not the morbid fruit of imagination. A shallow critic would object that personal bereavement is too intimate and sacred to be made the subject of verse. Yes, of deliberate verse in the forced modern manner, but not of poetry as the expression of strong emotion that must have an outlet and although personal in inspiration is universal in application. No feigned sorrow is responsible for Mr. Godfrey's sonnets, just as no feigned love was the idle motive of Mrs. Browning's *Sonnets from the Portuguese*.

The surcharged feeling found its natural outlet. Few of us cannot take to ourselves :

I was but human and as humans loved,
I was but human and as humans erred.
By constant admiration I was stirred,
By strong affection I was always moved.
The testing years my true devotion proved,
The latest years my fond endearments heard ;
And yet I sometimes spoke the ungracious word,
And sometimes from the path of patience roved.
My darling to perfection came more near,
Less prone her love to fail or fluctuate.
'Tis this that makes her now so doubly dear,
And makes my grief and my regret so great.
I loved—but not enough—when she was here,
I love immeasurably now—too late.

* * *

Regular readers of Mr. Bliss Carman's poetry know his style so well that they could almost identify unsigned verses written by him, should he ever choose to hide behind anonymity. It is a facile style, tuneful to the point of jingle, and as lyrical as a mountain burn. One wishes, however, that he had exercised more severity of choice in this last selection*; his range of imaginative ideas is not wide enough to support lyric after lyric without making the reader feel, by the time the end of the book has been reached, that the edge has been taken off the beauty. Mr. Bliss Carman's inspiration is so pure and true, his best verses so fresh and spontaneous, that one feels quite vexed with him for allowing his admirers to close his volume troubled by this sense of blunted charm. He is a poet who should be severe with himself—leave us one musical and poignant phrase for our soul's gladness, but restrain his inclination to play variants upon the same theme. Pan and Syrinx talk through the ripple of the phrasing, but they say the same things over and over again. One cannot afford to get tired of Pan and Syrinx—nor of Mr. Bliss Carman either.

Yet, though one cannot help finding *Ballads and Lyrics* somewhat over-prolific, the old sweet wood-note is there. So, too, is the well-known and delicate mysticism. This best-loved poet of Canada has the rare gift of leading us into glades which seem as mysterious

* *Ballads and Lyrics* (McLelland and Stewart, Toronto).

as ever they seemed in childhood—he can still capture something of "the glory and the dream." He can give us

> "the silver strain
> Wherewith the ghostly houses of grey rain
> And lonely valleys ring,
> When the untroubled whitethroats make the spring
> A world without a stain."

That is the poet at his best, and there we may leave him, in his cool and silvery rain-house, catching echoes of the Pan-pipes among the songs of birds.

* * *

The Editor cannot undertake to trace the source of quotations or to solve literary problems. Readers wishing to use THE POETRY REVIEW for such purposes may do so on paying a small sum towards the cost of "setting-up" their inquiries. Inquiries respecting individual volumes, books on prosody, editions of poets suitable for general reading or special study, of which we receive a large number, will be dealt with provided a stamped-addressed envelope is enclosed, but we cannot identify single poems. It is no great strain on our resources to search for a poem that has appeared in THE POETRY REVIEW, but we cannot trace every poem that has ever been published or identify a poem by a single line or assist competitors in literary research examinations. Last month we were asked to locate twelve quotations from Shakespeare, to give opinions on the significance of *The Hound of Heaven*, the merits of Masefield's narrative poems, and a brace of contemporary minor verse-writers for the use of readers of literary society papers; to supply a bibliography of Matthew Arnold (this has already appeared in THE POETRY REVIEW), to say whether any biographical details of James Mackereth and (or) appreciations of his poetry had appeared in any newspapers or magazines, and where his books had been reviewed; to say who wrote *The Fireman's Wedding* and *Gunga Din*, and a poem of which the title had been forgotten on the charm of Sussex villages; to give a list of the six leading Georgian poets with their best poems; to decide whether a contemporary poet had not plagiarised Smart's *Hymn of Honour*, and to find a composer for several songs for children.

* * *

We are familiar with the idea of God as Creator—we do not so often think of God as Artist, the *Methodist Times* reminds us. The New Testament gives us that liberty. St. Paul in his letter to the

Ephesians writes "we are His workmanship." The Apostle is using the terms of Greek culture; translated literally the sentence is, "we are God's poem." The meaning of "poem" is not restricted to what we know as "poetry"; a poem may be any work of art, a picture, a statue, or a temple. The "poet" is the "maker," and the fact that the word came to be used exclusively for an artist, whose medium of expression was words, reveals in how great honour the Greeks held their poets. The poet was the true maker, moulder, fashioner.

We fear that in our day the standard of value in this particular has greatly altered—the true maker, in the eyes of the world, is not the poet, but the merchant—the man who can make money. St. Paul, with his cultured spirit, cannot have been insensitive to the charm of Greek art, and there are evidences in his writings that the creations of beauty that have ever been the glory of that nation made an appeal to his wealthy nature. For St. Paul the supreme work of art was not perfectly fashioned stone, but a perfectly fashioned character. God Himself in the eyes of the Apostle was the supreme Artist. . . . The conception of God as Artist is a richer one than that of God as Creator; it includes the ideas of beauty and joy. A true artist delights in expressing himself, whether in picture or poem or statue. He pours his soul into his work, and strives to make it as noble, as beautiful, as perfect, as his mastery over his materials allows. . .

In the Book of Job the poet tells how when God had finished His work of creation, sharing the pleasure of the Creator, "The morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy."

THE GLASTONBURY FESTIVAL.

(From Our Special Correspondent.)

GLASTONBURY has become the Canterbury of the twentieth century and is a true centre of pilgrimage; though the pilgrims worship, not at the shrine of mediæval religion, but at the shrine of mediæval art. Anyone who has watched the progress of this year's festival, especially the activity of the student-work, cannot fail to realise that a new form of poetic drama is really alive and vigorous in the heart of England. This poetic drama is largely Pre-Raphaelite in character; and Mr. Laurence Housman's lecture on the Pre-Raphaelite spirit in poetry and painting sounded the keynote of what will certainly become newer and finer harmonies in national dramatic art. I use the word "national" advisedly. Poetry and drama are national assets; they should never be regarded

as the cult of a côterie of intellectuals. Against preciosity, affectation, exclusiveness, whether of the "grand" or the deliberately bizarre manner, the work of the Glastonbury Festival is directed. This is not to say that the Festival is iconoclastic. Its nature is educational and constructive. The students, who attend the various lectures and the regular rehearsals, are learning eagerly the lessons that the directors are trying to teach. The whole aim of the Festival is to bring poetic and musical drama into an intimate relationship with life. The little hall, where Mr. Housman's *Franciscan Plays* and Messrs. Thomas Hardy's and Rutland Boughton's *Queen of Cornwall* were staged last week, is a mere room in the heart of the town. Of stage appliances there are none Many of the actors and actresses approached the stage from the body of the hall, passing to it simply and effectively through the audience. (One approach, performed in a wheelbarrow, was a sheer joy of comedy.) The players were one with those who were watching them—one in spirit, in manner, in behaviour. As a student remarked, "You wouldn't think we were acting; you'd think we were just talking to one another." And the delight with which another student confided to me that "he was beginning to understand exactly what Pre-Raphaelitism meant" was a pleasure and a revelation.

The annual Glastonbury Festival is, in fact, an intensely vigorous revival of the spirit which inspired Wordsworth, Coleridge, and other poets to preach the beauty of common things. The Franciscan plays are true poetic drama; but it is a poetic drama which is played, day by day, among a simple and even an ignorant people. Yet there is no modern ugliness in it. There is, in the productions, the loveliness of old frescoes, of monkish missals, of stained church windows. In this beautiful and decorative setting, achieved by the simplest means (though behind these simple means is a designer of genius) the players speak and move, eat and drink, sleep and even snore, with perfect naturalness and simplicity. Everyday life is shown; but its dignity is curiously preserved, and no touch of vulgarity mars the portrayal. That is what struck me, above everything else, at Glastonbury. The productions showed the true mediæval liveliness to truth; but the truth was never obscured by any outward exhibition of ugly mannerisms. One felt that the spirit of all truth was beauty; and that in the heart of "the common people" the beauty might and would still be preserved.

* * *

For particulars of the Parr-Gere Music Poem, the Watson Star Poem and the Indian Verse Contents see the July-August issue of THE POETRY REVIEW.

DR. HUTTON ON BURNS.

THE Rev. Dr. John Hutton dealt characteristically with Burns at the Royal Chapel of the Savoy, on the anniversary of the poet's death—one of the series of Monday afternoon meetings in the service of poetry—as serious a subject as ever dealt with in that place, he remarked, although he felt restrained in dealing with it. He felt, too, that the homely Doric of the poems he read would not be understood by a southron audience. His own Scotch had been corrupted by a year's sojourn in London. He retorted on Henley's criticism that while Scotsmen like Burns and Stevenson let fly and then repented, their repentance was as sincere as the thing they repented of, a real part of their personality, not affectation, or smugness, or hypocrisy.

Reading the *Address to the Deil*, Dr. Hutton remarked that we don't speak about the devil now, but he still existed. The greatest trick he had played in the last hundred years was to persuade us that he, like Pan, is dead. "I wish you could understand this poem," he interjected, "it's awfully good."

Dr. Hutton, among the other good things in his incidental remarks, pointed out that some fool had said Shakespeare was not a Christian. "You might as well say Ben Nevis or the Thames were not Christians."

On the equally foolish posture that poetry and art have no moral purpose, Dr. Hutton said:

"It has always seemed to me strange that artists and poets should resent the imputation that it is any part of their function to moralise or to teach. I think I can agree that art must not have a moral intention; but Art, it seems to me, can never escape having a moral effect. A thing of beauty seems to compel one who observes it to come to a certain judgment about life. Great art can never fail to compel one to come to a moral judgment.

"From another point of view it is inevitable that great art and great poetry should have a didactic value; and poets of the rank of Dante and Wordsworth, and artists of the rank of Michael Angelo, far from refusing the rôle of teachers, conceived of that as their supreme value. 'I am a teacher,' said Wordsworth, 'or I am nothing.'

"Starting from Matthew Arnold's saying that poetry is the criticism of life, it follows that poetry, where it is great and deep and original, can never be anything else than a reaction against things as they are, and an invitation implicitly to those who read that they shall rise above habitual and conventional and accepted views into something which the poet declares is finer and purer.

"It is a thing not to be wondered at, and it is a thing to rejoice in that every age produces those men and women who have an unusual sensitiveness, so that things which duller minds have come to acquiesce in have the effect upon those finer minds of bringing a protest and revenge and indignation.

"Crabbe in England and Burns in Scotland—and I am too prejudiced a man to ask you to accept my decision as to their relative rank—undoubtedly were among the first to feel that mood of compassion for man which later on was to acquire such volume and to support the life of protest and idealism against the mechanism of the industrial nineteenth century. We might say that all the humanitarian legislation of that century and this find their origin and their supporting ideas in the scorn of Burns and in his pity. And one day, when the League of Nations has become the court of appeal for the whole world, and the human race has to that extent been federated, where could we find an international anthem like *A Man's a Man for a' that*, especially the last stanza.

"And even when such an ideal for the human race has been secured, there will still be germinal ideas lurking and leaping in the poetry of Burns which may invite and encourage the human race to extend the arm of pity to other creatures of God lower than the status of man. It will never be possible for men to read Burns's *Lines to a Mouse* or *To a Daisy* or his *Twa Dugs* without feeling in our souls region beyond region on which man may extend the reign of compassion.

"To a moralist also there will always be found in the poetry of Burns a certain wistfulness and contrition which will make him a safer and more catholic guide for average men than Byron or Shelley. In Burns's total message our neo-pagans will get very little support. At any moment in the midst of his naturalism something may be let loose which causes all the rhetoric of the flesh to shrink. It was the emergence of this same fundamental note in Stevenson which angered Henley, as the emergence of the same note in Wagner enraged Nietzsche.

"But it is surely fair to say that these minor notes are integral to the poet's whole mentality, and form along with the rest his revelation of what man is. To those who ask us to be natural, and merely natural, Burns would have replied that it is not natural for man to be so natural as all that; that man has a mysterious power of pronouncing judgment upon himself, a power which makes him capable, as in Shakespeare's Sonnets, of summing up the life of the senses, calling it 'an expanse of spirit in a waste of shame.'"

THE PREMIUM EDITOR'S LETTER.

THE money prize is awarded, undivided, to Miss F. Eirene Williams, Tunbridge Wells, for her poem *Demiurgus*, the epic of the world, re-written in rhymed couplets, a triumph of sustained eloquence, shot through with the most authentic poetry. The honours list follows :—

H. G. Holland, Hampstead.
Blanche Jones, Margate.
Lucy Malleson, Kensington.
C. G. Mortimer, Blackburn.
M. M. Seahy, Reading.
Una Malleson, Kensington.

The commended are :—

Evelyn Hayes, Edgbaston.
" Maris Johns."
Florence Overton, Stockport.
A. Doris L. Wilson, Bedford.
Grace Dorothy Reeves, Highgate.
N. Jean Kessler, Altrincham.
" Jabz."
T. M. Brust, Harrow.
Emily Shore, Earlscourt.
R. A. Shakespear, Fareham.
Rosa Langtry, Fort Wayne, Ind.
A. E. Mackay, St. Leonards.
Pearl Riggs Crouch, Colorado.
W. M. Jones, Bath.
E. G. Chapman, S.W.1.
S. Marguerite Goode, Croydon.
Amy J. Bineham, S.W.2.
C. H. Haman, Baltimore.
W. Van Dusen, Philadelphia.

All the above poets are printed in the current number (No. 2) of *Poetry of To-day*, and there you will find also the best poems of last issue's competition, those by :

Phoebe Fenwick Gaye (whose address, like her poems, is barely legible).
A. E. Street, Buxton.
Irene Bell, Darlington.
A. Selwyn Hickman, Bethal, Transvaal.
E. M. Atkinson, Walton-on-Thames.
Hugh Robert Wade, Norbury.
Evelyn D. Bangay, Chesham.
" Philomel."
Vera I. Arlett, Worthing.
E. Joyce Harrison, Lincoln.
Anne W. Gough, Clifton.
Helen Ives Gilchrist, Cleveland.
" D. G. J."
Thomas Williams, N.W.1.
Janet Atkinson, Tamworth.
Phyllis Hastings, Birmingham.
Audrey Wrangham, Hampstead.
Hilda Hart, St. John's Wood.
Nancy Pollok, Glasgow.

Our correspondence is generally a delight to us, as the fellowship of kindred souls is bound to be. It was rather a shock, then, to receive a letter charging us with having neglected to read the writer's work. It concluded : " My faith in the POETRY REVIEW is gone. It went down with the publication of the ( )—full of errors in versification." The poem named happened to be the

very one which it has given us recently most pleasure of all to have the honour of printing; but that is beside the point. This correspondent—who incidentally encloses more poems, one a very good one—shows a spirit quite alien from that of a poet. P. G. Wodehouse says: "Real golf is a thing of the spirit, not of mere mechanical excellence of stroke." This jest is sober earnest, if for *golf* one writes *poetry*.

We turn then to that approach-shot which should have been entitled *After Sunset*, but which has instead been named *The two stanzas on p.* 264. Our first critic says the rhythm is too regular and the result is hence a cantering sing-song. This charge must be dismissed, for it can so easily be disproved: the rhyme is often relieved, unless the stress is put on insignificant words. Our next speaks of a confusion of colours, and this is a rather popular criticism. But are not the colours *true*? Do not the little clouds above the afterglow change as the verses say? Isn't lamplight on a blind of a primrose or daffodil hue, the firelight red? Moreover, the poem is not a static picture and should not be criticised as such. It is a coloured cinematograph. Another refers to "doubtful rhymes," and instances *you* and *hue*, *all* and *magical*. I will not stay on this point, as I have dealt with it (and with many another) very fully in the essay on *Poetry and Artifice* in my new book, which the Editor says I may tell you is advertised on the back cover of this issue. So we come to "Evan Hathaway," who criticises in verse as follows:

"In my garden near at hand,
Where the larkspurs linger,
Spikes of royal anchusa stand,
Each a starry finger
Pointing admonition due
To a certain poet
Who has slighted all their blue,
And who ought to know it.

"Cornflowers gazing at the sky—
There were bluebells lately
And forget-me-nots close by—
All reprove sedately:
High above is each one's hue
Where a poet climbing
Finds the night and twilight blue
Offer better rhyming.

"Though the blossoms one and all
Radiance from above recall,

Sunset's roses turn to gray
Ere its violets come to stay."

The best criticism of all—because it is constructive—is Miss Nancy Pollok's : she writes :—

" There is a straining after effect in these verses. A purple sky combined with ' rose and daffodil ' reflections is somewhat dazzling and not very convincing, while darkness does not immediately follow sunset, nor does it invariably bring wind as the tenth line would seem to imply. Another fault is a certain incoherence and lack of reason, for in poetry reason must balance imagination. Here, the reader is left wondering what connection the sunset has with the poet's faith in the person addressed. Lastly, the lines tend to become jingle and the word ' the ' is used too frequently throughout."

I agree with just two of her sentences : " There is a straining after effect in these verses ; the reader is left wondering what connection the sunset has with the poet's faith in the person addressed." There certainly seems to be a straining after effect, and we poets are in a case where seeming is just as bad as being. The second point leads us to start at the beginning : has the poem a content ? Yes. The writer says, " All these pretty, ephemeral colours do not move me. Their passing does not move me. You, with your permanence, your bright ignoring of prismatic effects, you are my rock." Is the climax at the end ? Yes, at the very end. Is there a progress to this climax ? Yes.

Then what on earth *is* the matter with it ? Four small faults ! The writer of these stanzas publishes only one poem a year. They come to him as ideas, and have no dress of verse. Their final form is the result of months of brooding. This came to him exactly as we have printed it, and instinctively he mistrusted it. Herein he was right. Inspiration in verse-form is almost always reminiscent. " The spell of eve " is a pure cliché. " A swiftness magical " is almost as worn. The last line of all is the sort of thing that is drowned in applause at a music-hall by an enthusiastic audience which doesn't even need to hear it, it is—in a music-hall—so inevitable.

" Ear*ly lil*acs " is unfortunate, though *early violets* is a repetition justified by its refrain value. *Primrose windows* provides a double assonance, like Tennyson's *ambrosial ocean*, which has no related echo anywhere else in the poem. The best thing to do with this poem now is to put it back, not on the lathe, but into the crucible.

The criticism feature may be continued as long as the response is as encouraging as in this last case, For next time will you consider these finished verses by a modern poet of greater fame ?

THE INEXPRESSIBLE.

Thinking of my caged birds indoors,
  My books, whose music serves my will;
Which, when I bid them sing, will sing,
  And when I sing myself are still;

And that my scent is drops of ink,
  Which, were my song as great as I,
Would sweeten man till he was dust,
  And make the world one Araby;

Thinking how my hot passions make
  Strong floods of shallows that run cold—
Oh, how I burn to make my dreams
  Lighten and thunder through the world!

I have discussed the correlation of cold and world in *Poetry and Artifice*, so to that particular point I shall not return.

O. C. DE C. E.

* * *

The usual general premium of £2 for the best poem or poems submitted to the Premium Editor during the month (without limitation of subject) is continued, and six books will be awarded to the "highly commended."

Not more than *two* poems may be submitted at the same time.

Every entry must be certified as original and as not having appeared in print, and the name and address of the competitor must be attached to the MS.

If criticism is desired, 2s. 6d. and a stamped-addressed envelope must be enclosed. (If a more detailed postal criticism is desired, 5s. and a stamped-addressed envelope should be sent.)

Entries must be either typewritten or written in ink on one side of the paper only, and contributors must be members of the Poetry Society or registered postal subscribers to THE POETRY REVIEW.

All MSS. submitted for premium awards should be addressed to "The Premium Editor," and should reach this office *not later than* October 1st. Entries cannot be returned, but they must remain at the disposal of the Editor (whether awarded a premium or not) until after the issue of the next number of THE POETRY REVIEW, in which the award will be published, and they may be published in THE POETRY REVIEW or elsewhere at the Editor's option. The general conditions apply to all POETRY REVIEW premium competitions, including the American contests.

THE POE COTTAGE.

An Endowment Scheme and Forty Guineas Memorial Poems Contest.

THERE is nothing which conduces so much to a true appreciation of a poet's work as a knowledge of the circumstances influencing the view of life expressed therein, chief of which is the mode of life of the writer. It is this which lends such interest and importance to the preservation of the home of Poe, in New York, which, besides being the place in which a great deal of his most important work was done, has the more general interest of being practically the only dwelling having direct associations with the early literary history of the city.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, on a triangular plot of ground, about an acre in extent, in the district known as Fordham, then right away from New York, was erected the simple frame cottage, of one storey and an attic, which in 1846 was leased by Edgar Allan Poe. Here were spent the last few months of his wife's life and his own last three years, full of tragedy, yet full also of beauty and inspiration. The cottage originally comprised two rooms on the ground floor and two in the attic, but a kitchen, with separate fireplace and chimney, and a lean-to at the end of the house, were added later. The cottage was, of course, at the time of Poe's residence, a typical country dwelling, but by the end of the nineteenth century was being crowded by the encroachment of new residential buildings and entirely lost its picturesque country setting. As New York grew, however, the area now known as Poe Park was acquired by the city, and in June, 1913, the building was transferred bodily four hundred and fifty feet to the north, from its original site to a new one in the park, facing in the same direction and standing at about the same level, and it was then confided to the care of the Bronx Society of Arts, Sciences and History. The outside of the house is being restored to its original appearance, even to the position of the trees around it and the garden paths and flower beds, and the interior has been restored as nearly as possible to the appearance it presented in 1846, when the Poe family took it over. The walls, etc., have been restored to the original colours, and the furnishings approximate very closely to the known character and appearance of Poe's belongings. Of his own personal belongings there are now in place in the cottage his rocking chair in the parlour—the only heated room in the house—where much of his most ambitious work was done, a looking glass, and the wooden bedstead on which his wife, Virginia, passed away. The other furnishings are all of the period, and probably very similar to those actually in use by the family.

Thus restored as the poet knew it, the little home cannot fail to help those who know his works to visualise his mode of life and his outlook on its trials and beauties, for in spite of their poverty the Poes always kept themselves surrounded by natural beauty. We are told that "The family seem always to have had a bird, or a cat, or growing flowers," and the poet's own love for flowers and birds is evident in much of his work.

This keeping up, in so practical a way, a permanent living memorial of a great poet must surely inspire the poets of the present day to honour his memory. THE POETRY REVIEW has developed this idea into a practical plan to help the Poe Centre of the Poetry Society, by adding a substantial sum to the Poe Cottage Endowment Fund, for the permanent protection and care of the cottage.

To this end a prize of two hundred dollars has been offered by Mrs. Charles D. Dickey, Chairman of the Poe Centre, Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, jun., Mrs. Percy Stewart and Mrs. William Hunt Bartlett, American Editor of THE POETRY REVIEW. This prize will be divided and awarded, in order of merit, to the authors of the best poems of not more than forty lines each, having some reference to Poe or his work. Each contributor must enclose two dollars, or 7s. 6d., as a contribution to the Poe Cottage Endowment Fund. This amount will be entirely devoted to the Fund, without any deduction whatever; and every poem contributed will find a permanent home in the cottage, where all are to be found in a volume and preserved as a testimonial by the poets of 1924 to the spirit of Edgar Allan Poe.

All poems, with contributions, should be sent to Mrs. William Hunt Bartlett, 27 West 67th Street, New York City, not later than January 15th, 1925, the envelope being marked in top left-hand corner "Poe Cottage."

THE FOSTER BALLADS COMPETITION

To create new interest in the ballad, and to ascertain how effectively it can deal with present-day life and incidents, Mrs. Jeanne Robert Foster, American Editor of *The Transatlantic Review*, and author of *Rock Flower*, *Neighbors of Yesterday*, *Wild Apples* and other works, enables us to offer 50 dollars for the best ballad received not later than January 15th next.

All entries must be sent, as before, to Mrs. Alice Hunt Bartlett, Ballad Contest, 27, West 67th Street, New York City.

Since the time of Chaucer the ballad has been a favourite form of verse, being a favourite with Coleridge, Swinburne, Wilde, Lang, Macauley, Dobson, Longfellow, Kipling, and later-day poets,

including Yeats. Shakespeare said of the ballad : " I love a ballad but even too well ; if it be doleful matter, merily set down, or a very pleasant thing indeed, and sung lamentedly." Andrew Fletcher said that : " If a man were to be permitted to make all the ballads, he need not care who should make the laws of a nation."

As one of the oldest forms of English verse, originating as a song accompanying a dance, the " ballad " has naturally suffered changes of form, and the name has at various times been very loosely used to denote numerous differing forms of lyrical verse. To quote from the Introduction to the excellent *Book of British Ballads* published in the Everyman Library :

" The word ' ballad ' is admittedly of very wide significance. Meaning originally ' a song intended as the accompaniment to a dance,' it was afterwards applied to ' a light simple song of any kind ' with a leaning towards the sentimental or romantic ; and, in its present use, is defined by Dr. Murray as ' a simple spirited poem in short stanzas, in which some popular story is graphically told.' "

The " present use " can certainly be taken as correct, being the same form in which the ballad has survived from the earliest times, and we can safely ignore the numerous forms which have at times been loosely brought under the appellation.

As to the technique of the ballad, Professor Egerton Smith's *Principles of English Metre*, recently noticed in The Poetry Review, defines " Ballad Metre " thus, " a quatrain of alternate four-foot and three-foot lines, mostly iambic in character, but with free substitution, intermittently rimed (*i.e.*, second and fourth only). . . A fifth and even a sixth line is sometimes added, and in general much irregularity testifies to its popular origin." The following is an example from an early ballad, *Hugh of Lincoln :*

" He kicked the ba' with his right foot,
And catched it wi' his knee ;
And through-and-through the Jew's window,
He gar'd the bonny ba' flee."

A stanza from Walter Thornbury's *The Cavalier's Escape* provides a good example of the permissible liberties possible in a ballad, having six lines, and occasionally varying the strict iambic foot, but maintaining the intermittent rhyme :

" Trample ! trample ! went the roan,
Trap ! trap ! went the gray ;
But pad ! pad ! PAD ! like a thing that was mad,
My chestnut broke away.
It was just five miles from Salisbury town
And but one hour to day."

THE CITY SONNET CONTEST AWARDS.

THE entries received in this most fascinating competition, above 800, dealt with all the famous cities of the world, and many of lesser repute, coming first and greatest only in the minds of their poet-lovers. So many and vivid and picturesque were the sonnets that adjudication has been a difficult task, and a special Board of Adjudicators, which included Mr.George Sterling, Mr. John Hall Wheelock, Mr. Edwin Markham, Mrs. Elizabeth D. Preston, Miss Jeanne Robert Foster, Mr. Oswald Villard, Mr. Glenn Frank, Mrs. Douglas Robinson, Mr. Clement Wood, Mr. Witter Bynner, all well-known poets, Dr. Mary Brent Whiteside, Mr. Hudson Maxim (the inventor and brother of Sir Hiram Maxim), Prof. John Erskine, and Dr. Seaver Woods, the editor of the *Literary Digest*, showed great diversity of opinion in assigning first, second and third places to sonnets from among the thirty best contributions that were submitted to them.

Almost all the thirty received votes, and first place was given by one or other of the judges to the sonnets on Carthage (Miriam Allen de Ford, San Francisco), Bruges (Florence M. Bradford, London), London (Lucy Malleson, London), New Bedford (M. E. Baker, Wesport Point, Mass.), Berlin (Prof. H. Norman Lehmer, Berkeley, Cal.), Bethlehem (Mrs. Winder, Grange-over-Sands), New York (Morris Grey, Boston, Mass.), and New Orleans (Elizabeth N. Dillingham, Lakewood, N.J.).

Other sonnets that obtained a second, third or fourth preference included Hackensack (Daniel Walden, Hackensack), Pompeii (Catherine Partello, Mansfield, La.), Charleston (Esther B. Means, South Orange, N.J.), New York (A) (Stanton A. Coblentz, N.Y.), Indianapolis (Mary B. Moynahan, Indianapolis), and Santa Fé (Neita Carey, Goodrich, Col.). The remaining sonnets, Angora (H. W., N.Y.C.), Denver (Mrs. L. A. Miller, Colorado Springs), El Paso (Glenn Ward Dresbach, Lanark, Ill.), Florence (Muriel E. Graham, Stirling, Scotland), New Haven (Ada S. Shelton, Derby, Conn.), Onitsha (J. M. Stuart-Young, South Nigeria), Pittsburgh (Mrs. M. T. Phillips, Pittsburgh, Penn.), Portland, Maine (Ethel E. Rockwell, N.Y.C.), Rome (E. Nolan, Cagliari, Italy), San Salvador (Georgiana S. Gittinger, Virginia), The Twin Memnons of Thebes (Morris Gray, Boston, Mass), Venice (Washington van Dusen, Philadelphia) and My City—New York (Elizabeth S. Montgomery, N.Y.C.), were placed on the reserve list, thus justifying the preliminary selection admitting these thirty to the order of merit.

An analysis of the voting shows that the New York sonnet by Morris Gray and the London one by Lucy Malleson and Bethlehem

by Mrs. Winder are equal for the first prize. As Mrs. Winder's contribution is " hors concours " owing to her being on our editorial staff and as Dr. Seaver Woods plumped for her exquisite poem, we distinguish it by making it " Honorary First " and taking it out of the competition, the first prize of $50 being divided between Miss Malleson for her London sonnet and Mr. Morris Gray for his New York sonnet. It is a coincidence merely that the winning sonnets deal with the two leading cities of the world.

The $25 reserved for secondary awards are divided between Miss M. A. de Ford, Miss Florence M. Bradford, Miss M. E. Baker, Prof. H. Norman H. Lehmer, and Miss E. N. Dillingham ; and in recognition of third places in the order of merit $10 is divided between Miss Neita Carey, Miss Catherine Partello, Miss Esther B. Means, Miss Nolan and Mr. Daniel Walden. The $5 reserved for lists of City Sonnets already published is not awarded, no satisfactory lists having been received.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S VERSE CONTEST.

The book prizes carried forward to a second competition will be increased in number at the adjudicator's discretion, and will again be given in three classes—viz., ages under eleven, ages eleven to fifteen, and ages fifteen and seventeen. The book prizes include Mrs. Meynell's *School of Poetry*, Philip Wayne's *Lyrics for Children*, Dent's *Junior Poetry Book*, *Rainbow Lantern*, by Emily Lewis, and a selection of other suitable books not exceeding one hundred volumes. Not more than two poems may be submitted by or on behalf of any competitor, and each MS. must bear the name and address of the writer, and an endorsement of authenticity by a parent or teacher, who must be a member of the Poetry Society. School teachers, however, may send in batches of poems by their pupils, and in the event of any large number being received from any particular school or teacher a special additional prize or prizes may be awarded, thus constituting a competition within the major general contest. All MSS. should be addressed to the Children's Verse Editor, Poetry Review, 16, Featherstone Buildings, London, W.C.1, on or before October 31st, 1924. Personal criticism of MSS. can only be given on payment of a fee of 5s. Several poems may be sent by teachers and others for a private opinion for this fee. Any fees thus received will be devoted to the augmentation of the prize fund. A reasoned report and the awards in the first contest of this series appeared in the July-August issue of The Poetry Review.

THE BYRON CENTENARY

The Greek National Celebrations

(*continued from p.* 210).

The Nazareth of modern Greece is not imposing, but it bore itself proudly on April 19th. From the crowded railway station we tramped through narrow streets that would have been insufferably dusty but for their being strewn with fresh myrtle and palm. Even the smallest houses were hidden behind masses of greenery, lovingly arranged and plaited. At the Byron monument in the sacred enclosure where the heroes of the War of Independence and the victims of the massacre that followed the last despairing sortie after Byron's death are buried the Prime Minister again evoked the spirit of the poet who had made the Greeks feel the obligations of their ancestral heritage and roused them not only to reconquer independence but to promote unity among discordant factions. Sir Rennell Rodd eulogised Bryon as the true idealist, and asserted, what is true at least of those who accompanied him, that all Englishmen left parts of their hearts behind in Greece. Colour was given to this picturesque ceremony by groups of boys, many of them having the Christian name of Byron, in the uniform of the poet's Suliotes, and girls dressed in the garb of Byron's day and in the court costumes of the time of Queen Amelia as well as in the local peasant garb, flanked by squads of Greek troops and Boy Scouts, and of Greek and British naval officers from the combined squadron that had joined us at Corinth.

At the hour of Byron's death a salute of 37 guns was fired by the Fleet, and repeated from the shore, where all the flags were lowered to half-mast, and at this solemn hour a monumental column erected by the University of Athens on the site of the house in which Bryon lived and died was dedicated by the Rector of the University, President Demetrius Pappoulias, who lauded " the work of the great benefactor of the Greek nation " and summarised the celebrations and the eager Panhellenic spirit that animated them, of which that ceremony was the climax. The solemn heroic note was maintained by the subsequent customary anniversary service commemorating the historic sortie and those who fell therein, conducted in the Church of St. George by the Archbishop of Ætolia, followed by public prayers at the Heroon Park for those who had sacrificed themselves for the liberty of Greece. Something of the warmth of feeling evinced by the populace was experienced during an afternoon

interlude during which an excursion by train was made to the mouth of the Acheloos, opposite the castle of Ali Pasha, the ferocious ruler of Albania whom Byron saw in all his power and splendour and used for effective "copy" in the Albanian section of *Childe Harold*. It was a triumphal procession with loud cheering and roses and myrtle all the way, the fervour of the Byron legend being raised to fever point by the presence of the Prime Minister, who represented the further triumph of nationalism of the previous week.

The little town, which had absorbed itself into the celebrations, further associated itself with its hero by sending by Lord Ernle a duplicate of the Heroon wreath to be placed on Byron's tomb in England.

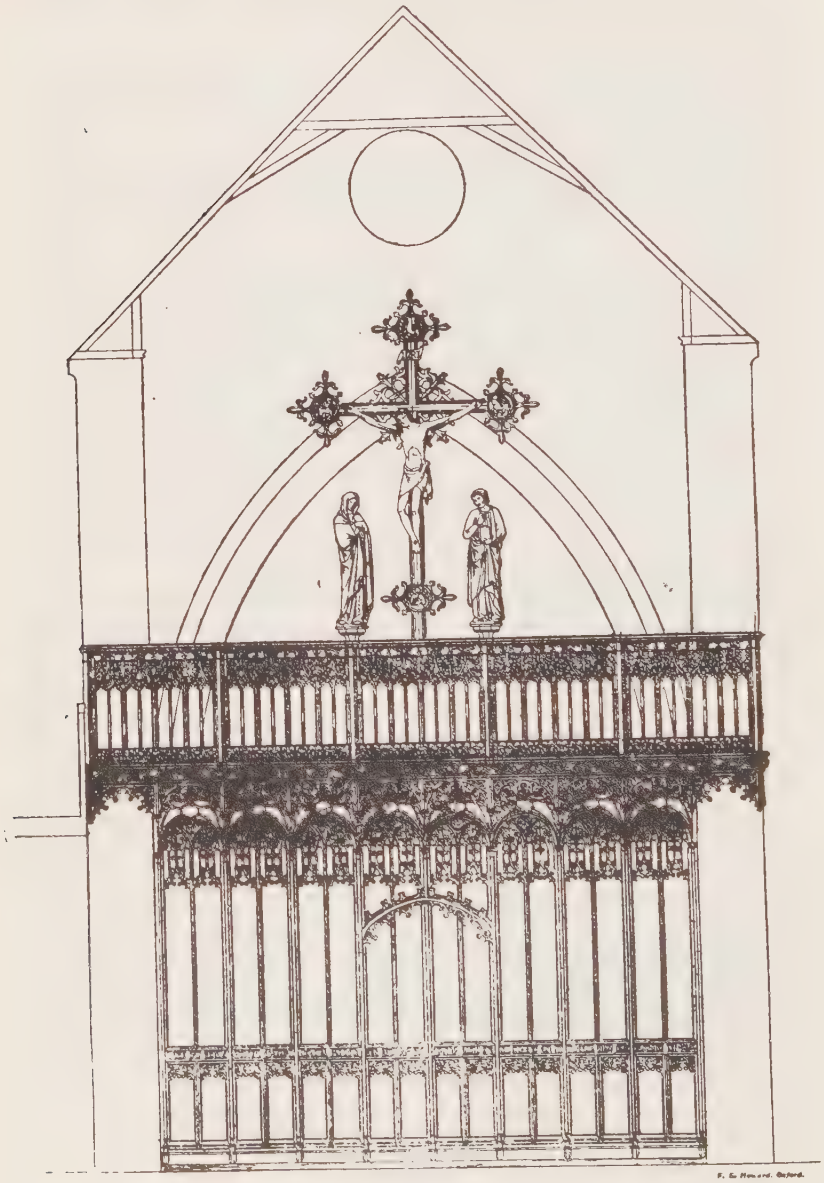
The official programme of entertainments came to an end with a civic luncheon at Patras, the first Greek soil trod by Byron, an event made significant by the spontaneous expression of M. Rhallis, the royalist leader, of the friendship of all Greeks, irrespective of internal complexities, for Britain, and their determination to give further effect to Byron's efforts for their reconciliation and reconstruction. Except for several English participants who had to take advantage of a favourable opportunity to continue their journey westward, the Byron celebrants returned by train to the City of the Violet Crown, to begin there in a private capacity a closer acquaintance with the beauty and splendour of ancient and modern Greece.

Only very briefly the major incidents of these crowded days in Greece have been mentioned—numerous incidental happenings must go unrecorded. We lived in an active dream, from which we who had to start on the homeward journey from Patras never fully awakened in Greece, which we had to leave unexplored in the calm light of common day. We did not get acclimatised either meteorologically or mentally—were scarcely awake to the perdurable culture embalmed and immortalised in Grecian soil. But out of this memorable pilgrimage will grow the idea that modern Greece is very near to us and has many claims upon us. We owe it much in literature, art, ethics, and need to bridge the gulf between the classical and the modern. One desirable outcome of the Byron worship should be the institution of an intellectual entente, built up by pilgrimages to modern Greece by groups of teachers and students to whom poetry and the works of the spirit are an abiding delight and an endurable possession.

THE EDITOR.

A BYRON MEMORIAL IN HUCKNALL CHURCH.

ON July 16th, 1824, a heavy-hearted procession moved towards the old church of Hucknall Torkard. A turbulent and wayward genius—a genius who had stirred the soul of the whole civilised



world, a genius who had sung every emotion of man, from poetic ecstasy to sordid misery—was to be laid at last to long and quiet rest. It was Byron, " that world-famed son of fire."

From that day to this, across a hundred changing years, Hucknall Church has been visited by an endless train of pilgrims of diverse nations and creeds, eager to stand beside the grave of the poet who gave his life for liberty, and not forgetful of his many services to humanity.

It is now proposed to honour Byron's memory tangibly, beautifully, and permanently, by adorning the church in which he lies buried. A magnificent screen of finely carved wood, painted with gold and colours after the mediæval tradition, is to be placed before the chancel, and will pass directly over the poet's resting place. It will bear a simple inscription in Greek and Latin, and on the panels will be painted coats of arms associated with Byron.

The design, which we illustrate herewith, is by F. E. Howard, of Oxford, and the contemplated work will cost £2,000. The Rev. Canon Barber, The Vicarage, Hucknall, Notts, who has the support of the Bishop of Southwell and the Duke of Portland, earnestly solicits and will gratefully acknowledge contributions towards this sum.

TO MEMBERS OF THE POETRY SOCIETY AND READERS OF "THE POETRY REVIEW."

THE General Council of The Poetry Society (Incorporated) beg to draw personal attention to the President's open letter (published in the last issue of THE POETRY REVIEW) with regard to the proposed Byron Centenary Memorial which deserves to be supported most widely and influentially.

They refrained from taking part in the recent Westminster Abbey discussion on which opinion was divided if not considered *res judicata*, which it was not desirable to re-open in connection with the very representative and effective Centenary Celebrations.

An English memorial should mark the occasion. The proposed Memorial Bed in the great Hospital opposite the Abbey, with an appropriate tablet, meets with general approval and if funds allow would be supplemented by the endowment of an annual Byron Lectureship.

Distinguished and influential support is desired. The Greek Minister in London and Viscount Burnham, who have been associated prominently with the Centenary Celebrations in England and Greece, have consented to act as Patrons. It is hoped that other eminent men of affairs will become associated with them before

any public appeal is made and that an active Ball Committee will be formed in response to this invitation. In connection with the Costume Ball, a list of characters will be drawn up and advice on costumes supplied. Parties to represent the persons referred to in particular poems and plays should be organised in groups.

Subscription, etc., forms have been prepared and will be sent to anyone able to use them.

Cheques, etc., should be made payable to " The Poetry Society (Incorporated) " and crossed—Barclay's Bank (Gosling's Branch), Byron Memorial A/c.

The following special donations are acknowledged :

	£	s.	d.
Barclay's Bank (Gosling's Branch) ..	1	1	0
Sir Lees Knowles, V.P.	1	1	0
Mrs. Creagh Howard	1	0	0
Collected by Miss R. Uttly	0	15	6

BYRON IN AMERICA.

A DIRECT appeal has been made by the Poetry Society to the American people to aid in the establishment of an English memorial to Lord Byron. The appeal will doubtless strike a responsive chord in the hearts of many of the older Americans who have long admired the spirit of liberty in the works of the author of *Childe Harold*. A popularity was accorded the British bard in America which has been equalled by that of few poets of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Byron has been quoted perhaps more frequently on the floor of the American Congress than any other poet.

His vogue in America was founded on the same cause that made him unpopular in his own country. The secret of his countrymen's animosity to the poet-peer was not because of the irregularity of his personal life. Morals had nothing to do with it. The feeling was of a political nature. The poet's democracy, his spirit of liberty and strong antagonism to oppression which were breathed through his writings were not in accord with the dominating influence of his time as regards governmental theory and action. Byron was an exponent of more liberal treatment of the people, and less latitude for the arbitrary classes in power.

For this primary reason the works of Byron were long more numerously found in American libraries than those of any other writer of his period. He was more than a poet ; he was a champion and defender of popular government. Not only in England, but

in America, the stamp of his influence was long seen in the drift of the nation to broader systems of democracy and greater popular liberty. Whether this will cause a generous response to appeals for co-operation in the establishment of the proposed memorial will doubtless depend on the endurance of the American people's memory. If the enterprise is clearly put before the educated American on this broad ground, it will doubtless succeed.—*Birmingham Age-Herald.*

TO THE POETRY SOCIETY.

YOUR appeal to the American people in regard to the establishment of an English memorial to Lord Byron truly strikes a responsive chord in the hearts of us older Americans. And I firmly believe and pray that Byron will come into his own again in the present generation. There are some of Byron's poems which from my childhood have so truly been a part of our very lives that they have become a part of our subconscious memories.

In the old Stuart College in the town of Shelbyville in the State of Kentucky, where I graduated forty-two years ago, our great English teacher kept Byron before us as an exponent of all that was high and great in the struggle for liberty and freedom of the individual. We loved that dauntless soldier-poet who, to the very last, loved his "native heath" and longed so to be laid to rest beneath its soil.

We Americans to-day should be grateful to his memory. Our Anglo-Saxon cradle calls out to us to join in this movement and may we succeed in this "Memorial to Lord Byron." If the Poetry Society could suggest to me some method by which I could put this great enterprise before our educated people, I would deem it an honour to serve Byron. For Byron's audience is by no means gone in America. How short a life one hundred years seems to you in England! How proudly we Americans count the century! From the depths of my heart I will be glad to work for our Byron Memorial.—Sincerely yours,

MRS. EDWIN GASTON.

Dallas, Texas, U.S.A.
August 4th.

* * *

The Monday meetings at the Royal Chapel of the Savoy will be resumed at 3.15 p.m. on October 6th—Tennyson's death day. Mr. John Bailey, Miss Lena Ashwell and Mr. Wright, of the Cowper Society, will be among the "readers" during the autumn.

THE QUARTERLY "EXTRA" OF "THE POETRY REVIEW."

THE early Icelandic sagas sang of gods and supermen, whose speech and ways were hard to entirely understand. Then from Chaucer and Milton down to Byron and Tennyson came the tide of narrative poetry, with intellectual or personal experiences expressed in the dignity of sonnets; this tide appeared to recede and let in a rush of emotional sentiments expressed in short poems or lyrics, culminating, perhaps, in those years of emotional pain inaugurated by the hideous stress of the war; this is, of course, only speaking broadly and of the main current. Personal feelings still hold the ascendant; there are persons who rejoice to be able to say of a poem, "That is exactly what I felt but could not put into words"; personally I prefer that a poet should reveal some high altitude of truth or feeling which it has never occurred to me to see or to feel, so that I may stand in rapture and awe, and then commence to climb in the hope of gaining that sublime height. *Poetry of To-day*, in which appears the heavy surplus of POETRY REVIEW poems—the careful winnowing of very many hundred offerings—reveals a more abiding foothold than mere personal emotion; it seems to point to other outlooks than the moist eye of the heart; (save with some exceptions) romance that is not entirely subjective is in its pages, and if the altitude is not altogether of heaven-reaching height it is, at least, out of the level of ordinary humdrum. Whether this could be sustained in a long poem is a matter to be proved. The next number should show us whether all the stones of the Temple are solid or beautiful, or if some are still papier-mâché camouflaged as marble.

In the first number of the revived supplement (2s. 6d. net) *The Magi*, by Blanche Winder, is a delicately perfumed and highly imaginative poem, as is also her *Ballad of Mary Ann;* and *The Ballad of the South Country*, by E. A. Fielder, is full of romantic mystery, and the simplicity of the form adds to, rather than detracts from, its old-world air. *Honours*, by Lee Shipley, embodies a fine truth told in poetic language. Then J. P. O'Connor Duffy's *The Fisherman* is delightful, especially the last lines, "An' the brown hills smile at you, like a lass Leanin' over a half-door." *Christmas in Spring*, by Oliver C. de C. Ellis, is worthy of any anthology, and *Babylon*, by Elizabeth S. Fleming, lilts like a poem by a modern Blake. The poetic idea of *The Sisters in Paradise*, by E. M. Fayrer, is marred by being enclosed in a prose form; the delicacy of the thought needs here the music of metre and rhyme, and, to our ears, *The Dentist* is as prosaic and as uncomfortable as the chair of any

of these " mouth manipulators." Free verse is possible only when some great new thought or mighty occasion gives the diapason that is missed in the absence of recurrent sounds.

ARTHUR HOOD.

A LONDON LUNCHEON TO OUR AMERICAN EDITOR.

MRS. ALICE H. BARTLETT, the American poet, and representative of the U.S.A. on the General Council of the Society was the guest of honour at a luncheon given by the Poetry Society, at the Lyceum Club, Piccadilly. Mrs. Bartlett (the *Daily Telegraph* reported) is an enthusiastic exponent in the United States of the ideals of the Poetry Society, which aims at bringing the message of poetry into daily life, and she has already secured a large membership for the society in that country.

Mr. Willingham F. Rawnsley, who presided, handed to her the Society's gold medal, in recognition of extraordinary services to the movement. Emphasising the value of instilling the love of poetry into children in their earliest years, he said that Mrs. Bartlett had succeeded in inducing large bodies of men, women, and children to take up poetic studies.

Mrs. Bartlett alluded to the fact that the Poetry Society was buying the cottage where Edgar Allan Poe wrote " The Raven " and other poems. It was to be the headquarters of the Society in America, and would be preserved as one of the world's literary shrines.

Commander Bellairs, M.P., said that he had attempted to write poetry after having been in politics all his life. He was trying to persuade the poets to enter politics and write about it and reform the politicians. (Laughter.) The novelists were making the most outrageous claims, and he would like poets and novelists to meet in a Convention and thrash out their points of view, with the politicians present to listen. (Cheers and laughter.)

Mr. Galloway Kyle, Editor of THE POETRY REVIEW, said that through Mrs. Bartlett the Society had gained a larger number of members in one year than they had obtained in the U.S.A. in twelve years, and he was afraid that in the course of the next year the Poetry Society in America would be stronger than in England, in which case they would have to migrate to the United States, establish themselves there, and then endeavour to reconquer Great Britain. (Cheers and laughter.) He emphasised the value to the international well-being of introducing American poetry to English readers and English poetry to the Americans. There were some extraordinary ideas in this country as to what American poetry consisted of.

The programme for the autumn session of the Kensington Centre is as follows :—

September 25th, at 7, The Boltons, S.W., Mr. Galloway Kyle, " Christ in Poetry."

October 9th, at 24, Ladbroke Road, Notting Hill Gate, Dr. Charles Whitby, " The Shelleyan Ethos and Pathos."

October 23rd, at 4, Cranley Place, South Kensington, Mr. L. Knox, " True and False Art."

November 6th, Mr. W. G. Hole, " War Poetry," at 73, Onslow Square.

November 20th, at 5, Roland Houses, South Kensington, Mr. Ashton Jonson, " John Masefield."

December 4th, at 27, Campden House Court, W.8, Commander Bellairs, " Poetry and Politics."

At the centre's meeting at Leighton House Miss Crosby Heath was most unfortunately prevented by illness from giving her address, and Miss Rolt Wheeler, with very great kindness, undertook the meeting and gave one of her charming and poetic papers on Irish dramatic poetry. The last meeting was at Mrs. Minshall's delightful house, and Miss Lightfoot and Mrs. Adamson gave a number of exceedingly good recitations, Miss Lightfoot from her own compositions and Mrs. Adamson from Masefield, Shakespeare and Browning—a great pleasure and enjoyment.

Miss Barnes, 7, Warwick Mansions, S.W.5, has kindly undertaken the Hon. Secretaryship and is entering enthusiastically into the work. The President is grateful to her, while not forgetting Mrs. Marigold's assistance and kindness during the past.

* * *

The Epsom Centre programme for the autumn at St. Hilary's is as follows :

October 6th.—Chesterton—Mr. Braybrooke.
October 20th.—Gardens in Poetry—Members.
October 27th.—Byron—Mr. McCurdy.
November 10th.—Readings from Hardy—Members.
November 24th.—Thomas Hardy—Mr. Lissant.

* * *

The autumn meetings of the Chelsea Centre, held at 29, Wellington Square, at 5.30 p.m., are :

October 14th.—Translation of Moliere's play *Les Femmes Savantes*, by Miss Vera Beringer ; parts taken by Miss Esme Beringer, Mr. Ainley, and other celebrated actors.

November 11th.—Mlle. Beatrice de Holthoir, " Poetry and the Cabarets Artistiques de Paris."

December 9th.—Mr. Wilfred Fletcher, " Dramatic Poems."

The Hampstead Centre of the Poetry Society Incorporated meets on the first and third Tuesdays of the month at 7.45 p.m. at Miss Julie Huntsman's Studios, 150, Finchley Road, N.W.3.

The following programme has been arranged for the Autumn Session :

October 7th.—Poems on Poets.

October 14th.—John Masefield.

November 4th.—Bees and Butterflies.

November 18th.—The *Choephoroe* of Æschylus, translated by Gilbert Murray.

December 2nd.—Robert Browning.

December 16th.—Bells.

Conditions of membership and other information can be obtained of the Hon. Secretary, Mr. J. F. Tilly, 32, Camden Square, N.W.1.

* * *

The Highgate Centre will resume for the autumn session on October 6th. The Readings will be held as usual at Southwood Lodge, 52 Southwood Lane, N.6 (by kind permission of Mrs. Aldred), on the first and third Mondays of each month, at 8 p.m. The following programme has been arranged :

October 6th.—Address by Mr. Wilson on "Lyrical Poems of Thomas Hardy."

October 20th.—Lecture on Rupert Brooks, by Mr. Wallis Mansford.

December 1st.—Edward Thomas : Mr. Julian Thomas. Members will read selections of poems from above three poets' works.

The Hon. Secretary (Mrs. Bowman, 10 Stanhope Road, N.6) will be glad to hear from any wishing to join the Centre.

* * *

A correspondent on holiday sends us two inscriptions found in Salisbury Cathedral that are of particular interest to our readers :

"To the Memory of Richard Jeffries, Born at Coate, in the Parish of Chiselton and County of Wiltshire, 6 Novr. 1848

"Died at Goring in the County of Sussex, 14 Aug. 1889

"Who, observing the works of Almighty God with a Poet's eye, has enriched the literature of his country and won for himself a place amongst those who have made men happier and wiser."

On a window in memory of "George Herbert, Poet, sometime Rector of Bemerton," it is recorded that

"He went twice a week to the Cathedral of Salisbury, feeling that his time spent in prayer and cathedral music elevated his soul and was his heaven on earth."

Dr. Ellis will be available for meetings of North of England Centres this autumn, and for Centre-formation meetings.

* * *

For the services of Poetry Society's recognised lecturers on the significance and the appreciation of poetry, application should be made to the General Secretary. A special series of lectures for young people can be supplied to schools and colleges.

* * *

Under the direction of Miss Scrivener, V.P., Principal of Cheltenham College, a Cheltenham Centre of the Poetry Society will be formed in the autumn. Miss Stacpole, sister of the famous novelist, will co-operate in the organisation of Southsea and Isle of Wight Centres.

* * *

A Centre of the Poetry Society, with Mrs. Winder as President, has been formed at Grange-over-Sands, to include Cartmel and Arnside. A report of the inaugural meeting of the Wordsworth Centre will appear in the next issue.

* * *

"I have that innocent trust in 'good verses' which makes me like them better when they scan; and I am too scrupulous to call either new or free types of verse which, in truth, repeat some of the oldest metrical pedantries known to me. I confess, again, to a sneaking liking for what great poets, I know, have decried, 'poetic diction.' I am tempted, indeed, to borrow the comment of a poet who, though he employed a diction notably vicious, was an excellent critic of all poetry except his own. 'As to prosaicalness in general,' says Leigh Hunt, 'it is sometimes indulged in by young writers on the plea of its being natural; but this is a mere confusion of triviality with propriety, and is sometimes the result of indolence.'"—Prof. Garrod in his Inaugural Oxford Lecture.

* * *

The Government of Greece, "as a token of appreciation of the Poetry Society and the important part taken by them in the Byron Commemorations," have bestowed a Knighthood of the Order of the Redeemer on the Society's representative at the Byron Centenary festivities in Greece. This high honour, which is "not easily given to foreigners nor even to Greeks," is a very gratifying and greatly appreciated distinction of which the Society as well as the personal recipient will be justly proud. We are reminded that King Otho bestowed a similar distinction upon the grand-uncle of our President, Sir John Franklin, the hero of the North-west Passage.

BETHLEHEM

LIKE a fair folded rose, the sun drifts down
Through the still purple of the darkening skies,
And quick start out the patterned ivories
And sudden evening whiteness of the town,
With glimmering windows golden in their brown
Faint lattices, and clustering walls that rise
Where Ruth once met the morn with love-lit eyes,
And David sang, nor dreamed to wear a crown.

Soft sounds, persuasive flutings, still there are,
Pale Bethlehem, thy grey small woods among !
Shepherds still pipe their flocks down those warm, far,
Wind-murmuring vales the rapt Kings rode along,
When blossomed in the dawn a silver star,
And bright-winged birds of God woke earth with song.

BLANCHE WINDER.

VENICE

FOR untold years the Brento and the Po
Poured down into the Gulf their silt and sand,
Mud banks arose ; Attila and his band
Came like a scourge, but some escaped the blow
By taking refuge on these islands low ;
Built ships ; took products of the Western land,
And traded with the East and shores at hand
Till riches came to them with steadfast flow.

And now arose the palace, dome and tower
With artists rare to grace their dignity ;
And Venice now, a queen in state and power,
Was fair as anything on earth could be,
When all her jewels flashed at sunset's hour
Their splendor on the Adriatic Sea.

WASHINGTON VAN DUSEN.

Philadelphia.

MY CITY (NEW YORK)

WHO could weave tapestries as cities weave
Their languorous, wanton spells about your soul ?
Who could untangle threads from out the whole
Gay gold of laugh and love, yet always leave
The throbbing grey that's strung with tears ; achieve
The ultimate in beauty, yet control
The varying skeins of life through all its roll ?—
If I have you, now wherefore should I grieve ?

Thus do I feel your subtleties, your balm,
Thus do I gird my spirit with your power ;
You draw me as the buoyant moon the tide,
You crush me as the tempest breaks the calm.
Give me the secret of each ripened hour—
How shall my yearning longer be denied ?

ELIZABETH SHAW MONTGOMERY.

N.Y. City.

SHADOWS IN THE BLUE PAVILION

"*There are shadows in the Blue Pavilion of dancers, and music rising and falling.*"—Li Po.

HOW fortunate I am, after years of solitude, to have so many fellow workers and the freedom of other gardens than my own! Before this century Chinese poetry in English was represented by two almost inaccessible books, Sir John Davis's *The Poetry of the Chinese* and Professor Giles's *Chinese Poetry in English Verse*. Professor Legge had also rendered *The Odes of Confucius*, and Joseph Edkins had written a couple of articles on Li Po in the Journal of the Pekin Oriental Society.

Recently the output has been continuous both in England and America. Within a year of each other no less than four books have appeared.* All of them reach a high level, all are being read. Why this sustained demand for Chinese poetry in translation during the last decade and a half? It is more than a mere literary fashion, an Athenian desire for strange gods to be worshipped and whipped and broken on other altars. A decade and a half of Cathay and a growing public every year! It is not the pagoda gesture of a precious few, since its appeal has been heard and answered by all sorts and conditions of men. Even working men have laid their tribute on the shrine of Li Po.

So, if Chinese poetry has come to stay in the West, and incidentally to influence the rising generation of Western poets, there must be a reason or reasons beyond the mere desire of a jaded palate for some new dish. And the palate of a modern reader is often very jaded and tired! Swinburne and Rossetti and their contemporaries were too rich to last. A later generation was born with the dyspepsia of harmonics in its system. *Vers Libres! Vents Libres!* Open the doors and windows of prosody! Out with the lobster mayonnaise and let's go to grass with Nebuchadnezzar. Well! every dog knows the uses of a grass diet and every age has its corrective

* *Fir Flower Tablets*, by Florence Ayscough and Amy Lowell (Constable, 10s. 6d.); *The Lost Flute*, by Gertrude Jolrissen (Fisher Unwin, 8s. 6d.); *The Works of Li Po*, by Shigeyoshi Obata (J. M. Dent, 10s. 6d.); and *The Temple*, by Arthur Waley (George Allen, 6s.)

for the excesses of the past. The writing of *vers libres* is one, the influence of Chinese poetry is another. But whereas the former is concerned purely with form or the lack of it, the vessel into which thought is poured and cooled, the latter deals with the contents and their component parts.

A gifted critic in *The Times Literary Supplement* once took our modern poets to task for their over-elaboration of thought. They were too ambitious. They were not content with the good kindly earth clinging to pedestrian boots but must needs sandal the star-dust of worlds beyond, and return shouldering the iridescence of angels. "Too far! too high!" wailed the writer, "and the fate of Dædalus awaiting them!" To them comes Mr. Arthur Waley disguised—*absit omen!*—as A New Planet, containing within his planetary self all the simple farinaceous food of tone poetry and the vitamines of verse. For my part, and because man, even super-man and poet, is still carnivorous, I would have changed Mr. Waley from a planet hanging inconveniently low above our shrinking orb into

> A great sheet, knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth, Wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts and creeping things, and fowls of the air,"

and the poet would be Peter of the haughty stomach saying in reply to the invitation to "kill and eat":

> "Not so . . . for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean."

After the third leading article in *The Times* probably the poet would be very glad to partake of Mr. Waley's "170 Chinese Poems" and sing a sadder and a wiser song.

The poet should be content with simpler themes and simpler treatment, says the critic. He should take the commonplace book of everyday life and use it as his copy-book and somewhere, somehow, there will be poetry. For "the Chinese poet starts talking in the most ordinary language and voices the most ordinary things, and his poetry seems to happen suddenly out of the commonplace as if it were some beautiful action happening in the routine of

actual life," which shows that the writer apparently knew quite a lot about Mr. Waley and very little about Chinese poetry. All things are lawful as material but their value as poetry is brought out in the treatment alone. Thus it is quite possible to make a poem out of a sick headache in a summer house or the suicide of a porcelain bowl before an astonished housemaid. The Chinese poet did indeed find "his themes in the ordinary affairs of everyday life, but he describes them in a very special carefully chosen medium."* And there are other reasons for the growing appreciation of Chinese poetry.

The poet was a Master of the Art of Life. Poetry was the natural outcome of his many-sided experience of his endlessly trained power of observation, of his delight in leisure earned through the long routine of affairs. If you sentence a man to leisure for life in order that he may write poetry he will produce something that makes very little appeal to the leisure of others. Li Po, who had more leisure than the rest, envied "the bully of Chao" with his Tartar-fashioned cap, a scimitar on his side, gleaming bright like snow." To him even "the grave of the bully exhales a perfume of glory." Then he turns and flings at the men of leisure: "Is it not humiliating for you, scholars and men of letters, who, seated by a window with a book upon your knees, live like the author of *Tai Yun Kin*?†

The art of life for the Chinese is based upon a simple philosophy—the philosophy of Lao-tzu called "Taoism." From it the poets extracted three precious things:—

Water, as the symbol of fluidity, change, persistence through adaptation.

Space, with its endless power of suggestion, its value in connection with the limited theme.

Humility in the presence of that which is greater than man, of the masterpieces which cause him to make a holocaust of his second best and inspire him from the dust to rebuild anew.

The inevitable outcome of this philosophy is grace.

* *Fir Flower Tablets*, Introduction, p. 87.

† *The Works of Li Po*, p. 128, and *The Lost Flute*, p. 27.

It is a minor jewel gleaming through Pauline dissertations and entangled in the intricacies of theology. But transferred to poetry it is sunshine and inspiration. It is the good-will from without flooding the empty spaces within. It radiates through poetry into a world of routine.

So these old sorrows and exiles and partings and rejoicings become gemlike from the grace of those who remembered them in music and line and colour.

How well this quality is brought out by Amy Lowell in *Fir Flower Tablets*. Take one selected almost at random :—

> Fine rain,
> Spring mud
> Slippery as bean curds.
> In a rose-red flash, she approaches—
> Beautiful, sparkling like wine ;
> Tottering as though overcome with wine.
> Her little feet slip on the sliding path ;
> Who will support her ?
> Clearly it is her picture
> We see here,
> In a rose-red silken dress,
> Her hair plaited like the folds
> Of the hundred clouds.
> It is Manshu.

Or this from *Tu Fu*, translated by Gertrude Jolrissen in *The Lost Flute :—*

> Bring me no more flowers. Bring me cypress branches in which to plunge my face.
> When the sun has disappeared behind the mountains I put on my robe of blue with the thin sleeves and go and sleep among the bamboos which she loved.

In *The Works of Li Po* Mr. Shigeyoshi Obata combines a mastery of the English language and its tone values with a Japanese brevity producing wonderful results. Here is Li Po's famous poem *The Crows at Nightfall :—*

> In the twilight of yellow clouds
> The crows seek their nests by the city wall.

The crows are flying home, cawing—
Cawing to one another in the tree-tops.
To the maid of Chin-chuan at her loom
Weaving brocade—for whom, I wonder ?

She murmurs softly to herself
Behind the blue mist of gauze curtain.
She stops her shuttle, and broods sadly,
Remembering who is far away—
She must lie alone in her bower at night
And her tears fall like rain.

Twelve short lines to say what I said in fourteen long ones. Well may Mr. Obata accuse me of prolixity !

To Amy Lowell the palm for subtlety, for the power " of seizing the poetic values in fine shades of meaning " ; to Gertrude Jolrissen for wistful beauty and haunting charm of suggestion ; to Shigeyoshi Obata for frugality and tone value, the harmonious relation of word colours to one another. I wish I could appreciate Mr. Arthur Waley as much. His *Temple* is a far more pretentious structure than theirs. Alas ! it retains but little of the original Chinese architecture. Its columns are largely Corinthian. It is embellished with conceits from the Classics.

Again your voice, cicada !
Nor grave ; nor gay ; part Lydian,
Part Dorian, your tune that, suddenly begun,
Suddenly ceases.

Much of it reminds one of the well-informed schoolmaster who, after long wrestling with Milton and *vers libres*, produces a half-Milton of his own. He is showing the boys of his form how to translate the sixth book of Virgil's *Ænid* :—

Great waves go floundering ;
They run, they leap into the air, they dance ;
Scrimmage like clouds, could clouds echo,
In *cataractine* roar.

His " stupendous spires," " hideous escarpment " and " chaos of disastered stone " send them sprawling every

time. He looks round. They bite the dust. Does any dare submit his contemptible paraphrase after that? Not one! The master shares with Jupiter alone :—

Divisum imperium cum Jove Waley habet.

And yet *Poverty* and *The Bones of Chuang Tzu* are fine poems and *The Dancers of Huai-Nan* is a lone thing of beauty in a Wembley of rampant stucco.

Mr. Obata in his Preface points out that there are two schools of translation from the Chinese—the old of rhyme and the new of free verse. Which is the right medium? I am inclined to think the latter, a hard judgment on myself, for it means the scrapping of everything I have rendered from the Chinese. But the matter is not altogether so simple as it appears to be. "The Chinese," says Mr. Waley, "distinguish two kinds of poetry: (1) verse which is meant to be sung; (2) verse which is meant to be recited." Surely the same standard might be applied to all poetry. If a so-called English poem lends itself neither to singing nor recitation what right has it to the title of poem? And if this standard is a true one, at least three-quarters of the first three books must disappear as poetry and re-enter as something else. Only Mr. Waley will remain *intactus*. For you can recite *The Temple* from cover to cover, though I would rather you didn't. But many of the *vers libres* are mere statements with qualifications. True they are broken up into lines, but that is a purely arbitrary distinction.

The Prince chose her of the jade colour
To attend his rest within the embroidered screen.

There is no earthly reason why these two lines from *A Song of Resentment* should not be joined together again. There is no break, no *cæsura*, nor rhyme termination to justify their separate existence, not even a poor little comma! In poetry no line is, or should be, an utterly purposeless thing. No! the case for that which cannot be sung or recited is stated by Mrs. Ayscough in her translation of Tao Kai-yu's commentary on Tu Fu—"Tu Fu's poems are like pictures, like the branches of trees reflected in

water—the branches of still trees." But the poet blows on the lost flute of Chang-Wu-Chien and the branches bend and sway, the leaves are whirled into the dance. Poetry is the dance of words. Words are the symbols of the dancers. And the dance itself is the symbol of "The life-movement of the spirit through the rhythm of things."* There is a rhythm of prose and a rhythm of poetry. The one walks on earth, the other glides over it. Let no one despise the rhythm of walking. One may walk beautifully or otherwise. Yet no collection of words printed or written can start into movement of its own accord. It is liberated and set in motion by the voice in song or recitation. Or we may read silently to ourselves and still set free, for the inner voice will speak or sing to the inner ear and all things will pass before us in their ordered movement.

But what of these motionless images of thought, of poems that "are like pictures, like the branches of trees reflected in water—the branches of *still* trees"? Only this—the artist has used another instrument. The flute is laid aside, he is painting with his brush. Words melt into each other on canvas and a picture lies before us. Word painting! still life! Let us deny it nothing that the artist can give—colour and time and space, everything in fact but music and movement as we understand it. For movement there is, though we may neither see nor hear it. "Still life" is even a contradiction in terms, since life is never still. Pictorial art continues the rhythm of life in another direction. It sings through sap and sheen, through green blood and red. It is the undercurrent of life while music and the dance float outward where all men may hear and see.

I put my whole soul into a song which I sang to men, and they laughed at it.
I took my lute, I went, and sat on the top of a mountain, and I sang to the gods the song which men had not understood.
The sun went down; and the gods danced to the rhythm of my song on the red clouds which floated in the sky.†

Where is the song with the soul of Li Po streaming aloft

* Okakura, *The Book of Tea.* † *The Lost Flute.*

in spiral gusts of music to the sundown dancing of the gods ? There is the mountain top crowned by the silhouette of a solitary man, and the red clouds massed above him. No stir, no sound ! The moment held eternally in line and colour ! But why call it free verse ? It is a fine picture ; let it stand at that !

Both *Fir Flower Tablets* and *The Temple* are overweighted with introduction. To Mrs. Ayscough and Amy Lowell between them 82 pages ; to Mr. Waley 52. They are like heavy gold frames of German origin, ill fitting to delicate brushwork. They chop away the infinities of space and prolonged horizons, they come solidly between the reader and vistas of suggestion urging him on to venture for himself, the very *raison d'être* of Chinese poetry. Between the little more of these and the little less of Gertrude Jolrissen, who says nothing at all, comes Mr. Obata, finely balanced and stimulating. He is just our friend and modest companion for a while, then with a wave of his hand towards the illimitable frontiers, a gesture of courtesy and farewell, he leaves us. Distinguishing between traveller and tourist he is Thomas Cook to no man. Alas ! the Howo bird hovers in the Eastern sky alone.

L. CRANMER-BYNG.

YOU

YOU remember our first walk on the hills,
How the wind tore about us, and your scarf
With the coloured ends blew across my cheeks ?
You snatched it back, eagerly—afraid
Lest I should mind. . . . How your jolly brown face
Smiled at me . . .
It was a day of great peace . . .
You moving so swiftly in the dark tweeds
That match your hair . . .
And the dog, with his black shining coat,
Bounding along beside us, his amber eyes
Watching our every movement . . .
Since, we have often walked so side by side,
But the wonder grows no less, nor the desire

To always have you there . . .
Sometimes I wonder, why it should be you,
And no one else who means so much to me . . .
How can I tell ?
I only know
When you are gone, the earth grows grey and cold,
Hungry and restless, and all beauty dies—
So what is beauty, if it is not you ?

R. FORTESCUE DORIA.

IN THE RAIN

LITHE poplars swayed, and shook their leaves, and sighed,
The while a little wind came down the hill,
And I,
Taking the upward road, felt in my face
Soft rain that blowing by
Caressed the placid land, and climbing still,
I saw the country lying green and wide,
A verdant valley in the morning's grace.

And I would not have changed the green and grey
For gold and azure of a perfect morn,
My hair
Blew in the drifted rain, my face was wet,
And I was all aware
Of promise in the fields of unripe corn,
And beauty where the poplars shook like spray,
And mystery where wind and clouds were met.

And now along the pavements of the town
A little wind is blowing tenderly,
All sweet
And cool and faintly lyrical with rain,
Till suddenly my feet
Are on a grassy hill where I can see
Slim poplars and a valley sloping down—
And all my soul is drenched with joy again.

NANCY POLLOK.

IN EXILE

O WINDS are cold in England,
And spindrift gems the grass,
While here the sun shines golden
On seas of azure glass.
Eternal summer reigneth ;
But, ah ! where'er I rove,
I always long for England,
England, my love.

Like smoke the groves of olives
Hang on vine-terraced hills ;
A heat haze blurs the distance ;
Deep peace the silence fills.
But I'd rather be at the tiller
Of a plunging ten-ton yawl,
Watching the water darken
Under a coming squall.

The almond blossom lingers
In drifts of dawn-flushed snow ;
A rainbow spray goes sunward
From the blue cascade below,
The Loup springs howling coastwards ;
And I long to drift away
Past Cookham down to Cliveden
When woods are green in May.

When Spring leaves starry footsteps
Across the flower-gemmed grass,
A voice comes calling—calling—
On all the winds that pass :
" Come back, come back, O wanderer,
Back across the foam,
To the sea-kissed shores of England,
England your home."

JOHN MEDDOP.

HARVEST FESTIVAL

SAINT BRIDGET'S door stood open wide,
A rare fine smell there was inside
From fruits piled up for what they call
The Harvest Feast.
—When I was small
I smelled that first. Eh! How I sat
And sniffed it up then, till the fat
Old beadle gave my head a clout
And said, "Stop that, or ye'll go out!"
I love that smell. 'Tis one grand blend
Of all the things that we do tend.
'Tis apples, ev'ry sort and kind;
And wheat and oats, which they do bind
In cunning little sheaves, to go
On Parson's desk there, in a row.
And 'tis great purple grapes, and green
Ones too, and piles of clean
Potatoes, and tomatoes red,
And giant loaves of new-baked bread,
And marrows, onions, carrots, plums,—
The scent of all they creatures comes
In one strong breath, that fills your heart
With joy and peace.
—There is a part,
So I've heard tell, where they use smoke
In church each Lord's Day; they've bespoke
His blessing that way, so they say.
But I do think Thanksgiving Day
With all its fruits is best. And why?
Because Lord made them all, says I.

B. M. POWELL.

YE SPARROWS

BENEATHE ye eaves, withyn hys littel house,
A sparrow holdeythe converse withe hys spouse
" Beholde," quoth he,
" Ye blossom-cloud upon ye bullace tree,
" How verray fayre it be !
" Doste hear ye April rain
" That comeythe singynge unto Earthe again,
" To lie in runnels and rounde pools of golde ?
" Come, let us wash therein, for lo, beholde,
" It hathe a magick holden from our eyes,
" To change us to Byrdës of Paradise."

" I love," quoth she,
" Ye blossom-cloud upon ye bullace-tree,
" Because 'tis wondrous fayre,
" But moste, because Saint Francis put it there
" For thou and me, my spouse,
" That we might see it from our littel house.

" I love ye rain
" That comeythe singynge unto Earthe again ;
" I love its runnels and rounde pools of golde
" Brimmynge withe wealthe untolde ;
" And yet, withal, I see
" We were not wroughte to be
" Byrdës of Paradise :
" Saint Francis hathe ordained it otherwise.
" For when our sombre dress was fashionëd,
" 'Twas like hys own, he said."

Thus sayinge, she
Gazethe awhile upon ye bullace tree
Quite quietlie,
And he hathe sate
Himselfe exceedinge close unto hys mate.

Then once again, withyn ye littel house
Each holdeythe cheerful converse withe hys spouse.

HONOR F. LEEKE.

NOËL

IF I were a shepherd lad, minding my sheep,
Under the cold stars on Bethlehem's steep,
I would bring the youngest lamb to Jesu Christ to keep

I would bring a young lamb,
Very small and sweet,
To the little Lord Jesu,
To play about His feet.

Were I a wise man, come from Orient,
I would fetch a new cloud, with all the dew unspent,
And a phial of perfume, to make Him sacrament.

A phial of spikenard,
Very rare and sweet,
For the little Lord Jesu
To pour upon His feet.

Were I a warrior king, very rich and bold,
I would fetch a shining crown, habited in gold,
And a sword of jasper stones, to little Christ to hold.

A sword of jasper stones,
Very fair and fleet,
And a fairing of amethysts
To lay before His feet.

Were I a child in heaven, I would fling down,
A circle of young stars to fashion a crown
For the little Lord Jesu in Bethlehem town.

A coronet of new stars,
Very fair and bright,
For the little Lord Jesu
To bind His brow to-night.

The little Lord Jesu, He goes by field and lane,
Calling at the cottage door, calling at the pane—
Who of all the world to-night welcomes Him again ?

The little Lord Jesu,
Very kind and wise,
Journeyed from Bethlehem,
And lost from Paradise.

FRANCES BEATRICE TAYLOR.

TO SHELLEY

LOVELY words
Like a crowd of birds
That sing
At dawn, in spring,
Low, low, loud, loud,
Over the dim
Dew of the lawn, to hymn
The sun-rising,
Wing not, ah wing
Not now, away from me dumb ;
But come,
Light on me, sit on my bough
And quire,
As you alone know how,
The young day-fire
New-born of the night
To greet
While yet he seems
All light
Heatless while yet he beams,
With dew wetting his feet.
Raise, raise your voices all,
Praise, praise with your lays ethereal
That sun Shelley : your brave minstrelsy
Out of the morn let it ring
Up to him quick, for he
Will sleep in the sea
By evening,
And changèd be.
Sing then, crowd your call
With music, oh ere night on me
Too, ere darkness, silence fall.

" PHILOMEL."

E. ARLINGTON ROBINSON'S REMARKABLE POEM

IN approaching E. Arlington Robinson's *The Man Who Died Twice* (Macmillan, N.Y.; Palmer, London) I am reminded of a sentence written to Mr. Santayana recently apropos of one of his surprising formulas for spiritual illumination:

> This is splendid for those who know what you are talking about, but to me a numbing thought comes quickly: how comparatively few understand intellectual pronouncements and *per contra* can sanction them. It is, however, my ultimate belief that by means we cannot analyse, such utterances, reaching sympathetic understanding, percolate in their essence the body politic.

So with this last book of Mr. Robinson's, a poem of 78 pages, in the dignified form of blank verse, dealing with the spiritual experience of his Fernando Nash. It is typical of the genius of Mr. Robinson and its ironic philosophy, and I venture to say it will be a limited audience that will delight in its study. The patience and faithfulness with which it is wrought entitle it to high consideration, but the tale is so couched that since few have Mr. Robinson's mental equipment, few will find it within their reach.

But strong in the minds of many of us, born at a certain time in philosophical development, is the importance to the ordinary run of mankind of "the greatest good to the greatest number," and there comes always the "numbing thought" of that "comparatively few."

To dwell a moment longer with Mr. Santayana. In the *Yale Review* for April, in his "Preface to System of Philosophy," as if answering this point of expressed concern, he says:

> Agreement is sweet, being a form of friendship; it is also a stimulus to insight, and helpful as contradiction is not; and I hope to find agreement in some quarters. Yet I am not much concerned about the number of those who may be my friends in the spirit, nor do I care about their chronological distribution, being as much

pleased to discover one intellectual kinsman in the past as to imagine two in the future.

To get on with *The Man Who Died Twice*, it is freighted from the first line with the story-teller's spell over his audience, who makes one feel " If I sit still and listen I will get a thrill." The opening lines illustrate the quality I mean :

> If I had not walked aimlessly up town
> That evening, and as aimlessly walked back,
> My glance had not encountered then, if ever,
> The caps and bonnets of a singing group
> That loudly fought for souls, and was at first
> No more than a familiar spot of sound
> And colour in a long familiar scene ;
> And even at that, if an oblique persuasion
> Had not withheld me and inveigled me
> To pause, I should have passed as others did,
> Never to guess that while I might have touched him,
> Fernando Nash was beating a bass drum
> And shouting Hallelujah with a fervor
> At which, as I remember, no man smiled.

After this very Henry James-like opening of the chapter, the story of Nash is unravelled, the tale of a man who having signed away his birthright and wasted his years, becomes at 45 " a penitent Hercules."

> To some persuasion sharper than advice
> I must have yielded slowly and at last
> Let fall my lyre into the fearsome well
> Of truth, hearing no protest from below ;
> Thereby surviving bitterness to indite
> This tale of one who foundered in a slough
> More fearsome, and lost there a mightier lyre.
>
> He was not humble, this Fernando Nash ;

Through such beautiful and measured sentences the soul of Fernando Nash is revealed—

> . . . He
> smiled
> And closed his eyes, finding an awkward humor

In such an unforeseen enfranchisement
From such a long and thwarting servitude.
A calm that all his life had been a stranger
To the confusions that were born with him
Composed and overpowered him as he felt,
Enveloping and persuading body and brain
Together, a cool relief as if warm wings
Were in the air above him. So there he lay,
Without a motion or a wish to move,
And with a sense of having only to rise
And give his hands to life. A grateful shame
For all his insults to the Holy Ghost
That were forgiven was like an anodyne
Laid on a buried wound somewhere within him,
Deeper than surgeons go; and a vast joy,
Which broke and swept and covered him like a sea
Of innocence, leaving him eager as a child
That has outlived experience and remembers
Only the golden moment as it flows,
Told him in silence that was more than speech
That after passion, arrogance and ambition,
Doubt, fear, defeat, sorrow and desperation,
He had wrought out of martyrdom the peace
That passeth understanding . . .

. . . and there was in this calm,
Which had unlooked for been so long in coming,
A balanced wealth of debts and benefits
Vaster than all ambition or achievement.
Hereafter it would be enough to serve,
And let the chosen shine.

. . . It had come at last;
And those far sent celestial messengers
That he had for so long a time denied
Had found him now.

. . . Joy, like an infinite wine, was everywhere,
Until it proved itself at last a languor,

. . . If he moved
It might be only to plunge down again
Into a more chaotic incoherence

And a more futile darkness than before.
There was no need of moving, and no need
Of asking;
. . . Seeing not the beauty or use of it,
They soiled with earthly feet the shining floor
Flinging the dregs of their debaucheries
From crystal cups against the gleaming walls
Of Life's immortal house

. . . The fire of personality
Still glowing within him,

And in the next potent lines becomes fixed a profound philosophy—

We cannot measure what the world has lost
Until we know the gauge the builders use
Who made it. All we know about the world
For certain is that it appears to be.

. . . The dower of ignorance is to distrust
All that it cannot feel, and to be rich
In that which it has not.

. . . But I have found far more than I have lost
And so shall not go mourning. God was good
To give my soul to me before I died
Entirely, and He was no more than just
In taking all the rest away from me.

So majestic are many of the final lines, one is constrained to wish Mr. Robinson had called his remarkable poem *The Man Who Was Born Twice.* A. H. B.

* * *

For details of the Poe Cottage Memorial Poems Contest (200 dollars, closing date January 15) see p. 341; the Foster Ballads Competition (50 dollars, January 15), 342; the Watson Star Poem Contest (50 dollars, December 15), 265; the Indian Verse Competition (£10 10s., November 30), 251; the Parr-Gere Music Poem Contest (50 dollars, November 30), 202. The Young People's Verse Contest, announced on p. 345, is repeated—closing date, January 31. Other announcements will appear in the January issue.

PIERRE DE RONSARD, "PRINCE OF POETS," 1524-1585

AN APPRECIATION WITH ORIGINAL RENDERINGS.

THIS autumn the goodly company of the literate all the world over is celebrating the 400th anniversary of the birth of the great French poet, Pierre de Ronsard. His is a name in which we, as Britons, have a peculiar and a particular interest. For he was from early years a visitor to the Courts of Scotland and England, and in an intimate way the admiring friend and loyal defender of Mary Queen of Scots, whose tragic figure and history ever evoked deep feelings of sympathy—whether in works of romance, in the theatre, cinema, or Palace of Beauty.

In 1538 Ronsard came from France as a page in the train of the bride of James V of Scotland, and remained some three years. The birth of the princess (who later was the tragic queen) took place about the time of his return, and we can understand how such an event would appeal to his youthful imagination—an appeal inspired and fostered by subsequent visits, and also by correspondence with the Court. He sang of her beauty in never-dying verse. Her appreciation was shown by a magnificent present to the poet of a silver model of Mount Parnassus, with the spring of Hippocrene, and inscribed: "To Ronsard, the Apollo of the Muses' Spring." He was also a favoured guest of Queen Elizabeth, who was not only a profound scholar, but also a lover of learning and letters, and so would appreciate the company and conversation of such an outstanding figure. Her estimate of the poet we know. When Catherine de Médicis sent the Queen a copy of Ronsard's Elegies the latter sent the poet a diamond of the first water—"not so pure as his verse." So we see that Ronsard was well known among the scholars and courtiers of our own land. And this consideration gives us a valuable clue to some of his more famous poems, and to the influence he exercised over the English poets of his own, and subsequent, times.

It is strange how often the lives of men are influenced and fashioned by what are called the " accidents of life." It was an " accident " by which Ronsard became the great figure he is in the world of art. Shipwrecked off the coast of Scotland on one of his visits, the exposure brought on deafness, which caused him to abandon the calling of arms for that of letters. He soon rose to greatness, and became the bright, particular star in the centre of a constellation of brilliant scholars known as the *Pléiade*.

Ronsard as Reformer.

The main object he set before himself was to impart something of the ancient classic polish to the French language, and to render it better fitted to be the vehicle of poetic expression.

Like all true innovators he drew upon himself, from the older national school, a storm of opposition and criticism. But his work was so well based, and his genius so exalted, that he at length triumphed, and was hailed as " The Prince of Poets."

Although Ronsard attempted an epic poem (which he partially completed), it is by his lyrics that he is best known, and makes his strongest appeal, at any rate to the British reader. These are so dainty, and brim over with a natural vitality and love of nature. Take, for example, a few stanzas from his poem celebrating the joys of Spring :

God preserve you, heralds of Spring,
Swallows graceful on the wing,
Larks and cuckoos, nightingales,
Turtle doves of gentle mould,
Who in songs a hundredfold
Animate the wooded vales.

* * *

God preserve you, variegated
Butterflies, which soon are sated
By the herbs' sweet orifices ;
And you new-swarmed bees so golden,
Who to coloured flowers are holden
By the ardour of your kisses.

* * *

A hundred thousand times I greet you,
When on your return I meet you ;
How I love Spring's golden store,
And the music that entrances,
Which wild storms raise in the branches
Though they keep me pent indoor.

Influence on English Poetry.

A most interesting and far reaching study is that of the influence exercised by Ronsard upon our greater English poets. I remember there stood in one of our bedrooms at home a richly coloured plaque representing a display of roses, from the newly opened buds to the fully blown flowers. One corner of it was adorned by a stanza that set our youthful imagination afire, both for its beauty and truth :

Gather ye rose-buds while ye may,
Old Time is still a-flying ;
And this same flower that blooms to-day
To-morrow will be dying.

Underneath the stanza was placed a name—then just a name and nothing more—HERRICK. For long years that stood as the only thing known of Herrick, yet regarded as a mark of the genius of that poet. It lay consecrated to him by the long association of time.

Judge, then, our amazement when, in later years, we wandered in the fields of classic French verse, and came suddenly upon the following couplet in a sonnet :

Vivez, si m'en croyez, n'attendez à demain :
Cuillez dès aujourd'hui les roses de la vie.

The similarity was too strong to be mere coincidence ; and we found in looking up the dates in which they lived that Herrick, with his elegant and beautiful gift, was the debtor of Pierre de Ronsard for the idea that inspired his lovely lyric. This discovery did not lessen the charm of Herrick, but magnified the genius of Ronsard. For a poet that can inspire other poets—including even Shakespeare —to produce immortal work is surely entitled to the name of genius. And it is with a large measure of right and

justice that such a man was styled during his lifetime a "Prince of Poets."

Mary Queen of Scots.

One thing more may be of interest to us—his sonnet on Mary Queen of Scots. It was an appeal made to Queen Elizabeth on behalf of her royal prisoner. When we read it first (and for many a time afterwards), it appeared to be just a poem on a subject that would appeal to a French poet, and one on which he might, ordinarily, exercise his great gifts. But when we knew the historical facts connected with it the whole aspect was changed. It was the difference experienced in seeing a stained glass window from the outside first, and then seeing it from the inside with the sun shining brightly through it. The leadings give an idea of form, but light alone gives the thing beauty and real significance.

Reading the sonnet in the light of our knowledge of the times and the persons concerned, we appreciate the soul of the poet—his affection for the daughter of the royal mistress in whose train he had come as a lad, the royal prisoner whose friend he had been, the mighty Queen of England whose court he had visited as an honoured guest. We see, too, the spirit of the erstwhile man-of-arms who girds at his fellow-countrymen for their craven spirit (as he deems it) in not carrying her cause to the dread arbitrament of war.

Although the sea doth set us far apart,
  The sunlight of thine eyes, whose purest ray
  Hath no compeer within the world to-day,
Is never long time absent from my heart.

O Queen, who prisoner keeps a queen so rare,
  Appease thy wrath and change thy harsh decree,
  The sun at rise and setting doth not see
On earth an act so brutal anywhere.

Degenerate now are ye from famous sires—
The Rolands, Renauds, Lancelots—stout squires
  Who for their ladies fought with courage keen;
Whereas, O Sons of France, ye have not cared
To don your armour, nor in fighting dared
  To free from servitude so fair a queen.

The gallant poet, however, had the solace of dying before the royal lady whose cause he so stoutly and lovingly championed.

Britons, as lovers of the generous and beautiful, will I am sure send a sheaf of kindly thoughts across the Channel in memory of such a glorious son of France as Pierre de Ronsard.

LEWIS DAVIES, B.A.
(Lewys Glyn Cynon).

THE WIND FLOWER

FLOWER of a day
Yet breath of the Eternal:
Singing thy song of joy alway.
Life, at thy touch reveals love's hidden splendour
God's inner meaning manifest in thee.

Symbol of truth
Perfection in petal
Growing to beauty through love's secret ways
Breathing out fragrance until day is ended,—
Messenger of life, breath, immortality.

BELFRAGE GILBERTSON.

I CAN FORGET

I CAN forget, but only when
I walk alone apart from men—
There is no solace in men's eyes
Nor in their words not overwise.

I can forget when quite apart
I walk with Him in the forest's heart,
And find where leaf-brown streams run cool
God's own reflection in some pool.

R. R. GREENWOOD.

THE KINGLY LEGEND IN ENGLISH POETRY: II

BEFORE going on to touch briefly upon further details of the Arthurian legend, I should like to quote a remark made by Professor Gilbert Murray, which appears to be significantly appropriate to the whole subject. In writing of Greek poetry he observes that it is " very seldom about the present. It is about the past, and that an ideal past. What we have to notice there is that this kind of rule, which has been usual in all great ages of poetry, is apparently not an artificial or arbitrary thing, but a tendency that grew up naturally with the first great expressions of poetical feeling."

When we begin to think earnestly of this, and to pass in mental review all those great poems of which we never tire, we feel dimly that we are on the brink of the discovery of an absolute value in poetry. No one has yet, I suppose, laid down a mathematical rule of beauty, or produced a scientific estimate of achievement, by means of which poetry may be tabulated in a first, second, or third degree of excellence. Its appeal is to the emotions, its music for the ear of the imagination. But I think we may safely affirm that it is by the nobility and loftiness of the emotions which it arouses, the purity and simplicity of the imagination which it delights, that the importance of poetry must stand or fall. If we concede this, we understand why the most enduring poetry of any nation deals with an ideal or heroic past. This past, being as it were denuded of material appearance, has an enhanced spiritual value ; a value which must not be confounded with mere romance. Stories that survive, that are handed down through the generations, have in them the very essence of life. Their appeal is not to our brains, but to our blood. If our blood is stirred by all big simple recitals of life and death, how much more is it stirred when such recitals reveal the beliefs, the heroisms, and the aspirations of our own ancestors ?

Of course there is much true poetry extant which does not deal with the heroic or mythical past ; and those poets

who have dealt with it so finely have dealt equally finely with other themes. But is not all great poetry allied to what thrills us in wonderful old tales? Is it not, as they are, relieved of material appearances, and expressive of hidden, half-lost, lovely things? Was it not this desire to escape into a land of beauty or heroism or wisdom that inspired Shelley and Keats? Does not every true poet lift the veil of the Temple for us, and show us something of the glory of God within? I think so. And I think that to realise this fully will bring us to a surer comprehension of an absolute value in poetry, and a surer measure by which we may truly gauge its worth.

Another reason, I think, why these tales of the past appeal so keenly is because, in some subtle way, they are a kind of triumph over death. A hero is really someone to whom an idea is a greater actuality than his own physical existence. Old poetry is alive with such heroes. Generally their idea was the idea of patriotism. In the Arthur legend it was patriotism at first; but, when the cycle gathered into its sweep all the rich traditions and ideals of the period, the hero of the poems became the Quester—the adventurous and fearless knight who tried to penetrate the great secret of the Holy Grail.

Now in Geoffrey of Monmouth,* and in two other important Arthurian chroniclers, Wace and Layamon, there is no mention of the Holy Grail. Of Wace and Layamon a few words must be said. Both these writers put Geoffrey's material into verse; both gave it much of their own individuality and spirit. Wace, like so many others, was patronised by Henry II and was a great "maker of books in Romance." His work is quite characteristic, and, if he had written to-day, he would probably be called a pre-Raphaelite. He is always just a little shy of the faery quality of much of his material, however, and inclined to apologise for it; though he, and Layamon after him, have left us most picturesque accounts of the

* Last month, on p. 286 of the *P.R.*, Geoffrey's date, by a slip, was given as the eleventh century. It was of course the twelfth century, as the rest of the article clearly showed.

magical birth of Merlin. This great wizard was, of course, the son of a demon and a Princess who afterwards became a nun. I will quote Layamon's account of her betrayal, which seems to me very beautiful. The nun gives it in her own words.*

"King, I will tell thee marvellous stories. My father Conaan the King loved me through all things; then became I in stature wondrously fair. When I was fifteen years of age, then dwelt I in bower, in my mansion; my maidens with me, wondrously fair. And when I was in bed in slumber, with my soft sleep, then came before me the fairest thing that ever was born, as if it were a tall knight, arrayed all of gold. This I saw in dream each night in sleep. This thing glided before me, and glistened of gold; oft it me kissed, and oft it me embraced; oft it approached me and oft it came to me very nigh. . . . Then perceived I at the end that I was with child; when my time came this boy I had. I know not in this world what his father were. . . . nor whether it were evil-doing, or on God's behalf dight. Alas! as I pray for mercy, I know not any more to say to thee of my son, how he is come to the world."

The explanation given is that Merlin's father is of a race called Incubi Dæmones, and that this incubus, or demon, has prevailed with the maiden by magic. The tale must come from very very old folk-lore. French commentators have written countless monographs on the Merlin story. One supposes he must originally have been a kind of priest-king among the Druids. Constantly Druidical lore crops up in all the Arthur tales. Guinevere's condemnation to death by burning, given in Malory, is Druidical law. Wace mentions the punishment as a possibility; aware, evidently, that this form of death was the Druidical punishment for unfaithful wives. Of course Wace, Layamon, and Geoffrey all give the older version of Guinevere's sin, and portray her as joining with Modred, Arthur's nephew, to usurp his kingdom during his absence in Rome. "For Modred her name was a hissing," says Wace; adding that, when Arthur came home and overthrew Modred in battle, the Queen fled to Caerleon, entered a convent of nuns and took the veil. But the days

* *Everyman* Library translation (Dent).

of Arthur's glory ended with Guinevere's and Modred's sin; and, in the fight to recover his kingdom, "there perished the brave and comely youth Arthur had nourished and gathered from so many and fair lands. There also the knights of his Table Round, whose praise was bruited about the whole world."

Tennyson, one imagines, had not access to Wace and Layamon, though he definitely mentions "Geoffrey's book," and also Malory's. But his account of the breaking-up of the knighthood of the Round Table, and of the evil Guinevere had wrought, has in it the very spirit of the old fatalistic tales. The more one reads twelfth and thirteenth century poetry the more one is struck by the extraordinary genius of Tennyson, in that he literally made the spirit of the past live again. In Layamon's account of Arthur's birth we are told of the gladness in fairyland, and of the elves who took him and gave him gifts. Instantly Tennyson's charming lines spring to memory, when he describes the events before Arthur's marriage, ill-fated though that marriage was to be. The little novice of Almesbury tells the Queen what her father saw.

> He heard
> Strange music, and he paused, and turning—there
> All down the lonely coast of Lyonesse,
> Each with a beacon-star upon his head,
> And with a wild sea-light about his feet,
> He saw them. . . .
> And in the light the white mermaiden swam,
> And strong man-breasted things stood from the sea,
> And sent a deep sea-voice through all the land,
> To which the little elves of chasm and cleft
> Made answer, sounding like a distant horn.

I should like to quote again and again from Tennyson's *Idylls*, were it possible to do so in an article too brief to touch on more than a fraction of the poetry that has been written round the Arthur legends. If ever a poet had what Arnold called the "natural magic" of the Celt, Tennyson had it. After Spencer he is, I think, "of all our poets the most poetical." Little wonder is it that

the faery element, which is so beautiful a feature in the old Welsh stories of the Round Table, should have captivated the Victorian Laureate's imagination and inspired what is loveliest in his work.

It is in Layamon, I think, that we find the first mention of Avalon as the faery island to which Arthur was taken when grievously wounded after the battle with Modred and the flight of Guinevere. This is Layamon's account: *

"I will fare to Avalon," said Arthur, as he lay upon the ground with sorrowful heart, "to Argante the Queen, an elf most fair, and she shall make my wounds all sound; make me all whole with healing draughts. And afterwards I will come again to my kingdom and dwell with the Britons with mickle joy."

"Even with the words there approached from the sea that was a short boat, floating with the waves; and two women therein, wondrously formed; and they took Arthur anon, and bare him quickly, and laid him softly down, and forth they gan depart . . . and the Britons believe yet that he is alive, and dwelleth in Avalon with the fairest of all elves; and the Britons ever yet expect when Arthur shall return."

Little enough space is left to deal with an enormous mass of fascinating material; above all with the incorporation of the Grail legend into the cycle. The Grail story is, of course, rooted in the tradition of the sacred and mysterious treasure brought to "White Britain" by Joseph of Arimathea. Robert de Borron, who wrote about 1180, is one of the most important—personally, I think, *the* most important—of the poets who dealt with this mystery. His poem is a rich treasure-house alike for the folk-lore student, the mystic, and the lover of lovely things. The poem describes how a vision of Christ, in the form of a "beautiful man," appears to a doubting monk, and gives him the book of the Grail. The story in the book is a story of marvels and of terrors. Thunder and lightning come as the monk reads, and then follows a sweet fragrance, and a singing, and the sounds of clear bells and of flying birds. The tale in the book tells of Joseph's departure from Jerusalem, with the ark in which his sacred treasure is bestowed;

* *Everyman Library* trans.

and we get a wonderful description of a vision seen by Josephes, his son, when, on one occasion the doors of the ark were opened to reveal the full meaning of what was within. The descendants of Joseph are nearly always the guardians of the Grail; and in some versions Galahad is his own son. A most beautiful poem of Joseph of Arimathea, which appears to be little known, was written in English by an unnamed author and printed in 1520. In this poem we are told how Joseph begged the body of Christ from Pilate and "Pilate granted him all his asking."

> So Joseph laid Jesu to rest in his sepulchre,
> And wrapped his body in a cloth called sendony,
> Rich was it wrought, with gold and silk full pure,
> Joseph of a maid bought it in Arimathea city.

We have here, also, a full account of the settlement of Joseph and his companions at Glastonbury, and the blossoming of his staff into the Glastonbury Christmas thorn.

Often, in studying the Arthur legend, I have wondered why Chaucer made no use of it. That he knew all about it is obvious from many references; but, if anything, he seemed to poke sly fun at its romanticism. The tale of the Wife of Bath is, of course, supposed to be an Arthurian story; and memories of Chrestien's Guinevere hang about the moral that the one thing desired by women is power. Chaucer's most beautiful poems, in my opinion, are the *Prioresses Tale* and the *Second Nonnes Tale*, both of which are based upon delicately spiritual legends; so, obviously, he could have made lovely work of the Grail story, but he left it absolutely alone.

Spenser, also, ignored the Grail legend, though of course Arthur is the original hero of the *Faerie Queene*. In his preface the poet declares that he sets out to "fashion a gentleman or noble person in virtuous and gentle discipline," and to take for this purpose "the history of King Arthur as most fit for the excellency of his person." A comparison of the *Faerie Queene* with Malory's *Morte d'Arthur* yields rather astonishing results. We find, in fact, that the Faerie Queene herself—who is, of course, Queen Elizabeth—holds a court like the court of the Round

Table, and that it is to *her* that people come with stories of wrong and claim for redress. It is the order of chivalry with a woman at its head. Arthur is at first only the knight who seeks the great adventure of the Faerie Queene, and who is described as a "fayre branch of noblesse, flower of chivalry," breaking into the poem in a cloud of almond blossoms.

> Upon the top of all his lofty crest,
> A bunch of hairs discoloured diversely,
> With sprinkled pearl and gold full richly drest,
> Did shake, and seem to dance for jollity,
> Like to an almond tree ymounted high
> On top of green Selinis all alone,
> With blossoms brave bedecked daintily;
> Whose tender locks do tremble every one
> At every breath that under Heaven is blown.

Here we have Arthur in Spenser's own fairyland—that most exquisitely-imagined land of illusion. But the poet soon deserted the Celtic tales for those in which his whole soul delighted—the tales of Greek pastoral mythology. It is to Tennyson, and to Tennyson alone, that we have to look for the true return of Arthur to English poetry; the Arthur of the Norman *trouvères* and the Welsh bards, of Christian patriotism and Holy Mother Church, whose birth is sung by all the fairies of fairyland and whose knights are once more the old mediæval Questers, seeking to solve the ancient mystery, and to recover for the world the healing, the beauty, and the great wonderful mystical meaning of the vanished Holy Grail.

BLANCHE WINDER.

THE DYNAMICS OF AMERICAN POETRY—VI

PAUL SCOTT MOWRER, LOUIS GOLDING, HENRY MEADE BLAND, MUNA LEE (Mrs. LUIS MUNOZ MARIM), WILLIAM ALEXANDER PERCY.

A BOOK of poems by an authority on international politics, world traveller, war correspondent, representative of a great American newspaper at the Versailles Peace Conference and Conference on Limitation of Armaments, author of books on diplomacy, and Chevalier Legion of Honor draws the reader with an uncommon lure.

The anticipation is fully justified in the case of Paul Scott Mowrer's *The Good Comrade and Fairies* (E. P. Dutton).

There are fifty-five good poems in this book, written in a different mood from his former volume, *Hours of France*, which was mainly an appreciation of the nation of which Mr. Mowrer has been a guest almost constantly since 1910, when he first went to Paris to represent the *Chicago Daily News*.

Mr. Mowrer aids in the selection of the best poems in this latest volume in the following letter:

> Regarding which of the verses in my latest little book I prefer, I find it rather embarrassing to answer, for, to be quite frank, I like them *all*. However, I suppose a fair selection might include the following titles: *Whisperings*, *Elm-Engirdled Glade*, *Sleep*, *A Gift of Violets*, *Springtime in War*, *The Place of Beauty*, *Magic*, and *Little Fellow*.

Mr. Mowrer's selections betray his love for Nature and simple life and things free of the artificial guile of politics and diplomacy. Thus in *The Place of Beauty*:

> I who thirst for joy as a tree for dewfall,
> Turn my face away from the screaming city;
> Yonder, where the rivulet runs in music,
> Beauty is dwelling.

Who will praise the grass or applaud the mosses,
If I go hence to the place of beauty?
Who quaff slow delight at the pools of quiet?
Who see fairies?

Again in *Little Fellow*:

It was on a misty morning,
And the sky was full of swallows,
When I saw the little fellow.
He was in the wheat, adorning
Naked waist with poppy petals.
As the heavy grain was yellow,
So was he; and he was wrinkled
As a walnut, and his eye was
Large and greenish. When he saw me,
All his hair stood up and crinkled;
But before he ran, he snickered,
And he made a face to awe me.

In another mood, in the *Valley of Forgotten Songs*, we find the poet

Deep in the moon-lighted vale ran the stream,
Between willows and rushes,
In whispers and hushes;
Steep stood the turreted rocks above ruins
Of temples, vine-covered,
Dimly discovered.

* * * *

"Ye—who are ye?" I cried out in compassion.
The hesitant dancer
Faintly made answer:
"We are the wraiths of old songs, in the hearts
Of dead poets begotten,
Dead and forgotten."

Louis Golding introduces his book *Prophet and Fool* (E. P. Dutton) with F. V. Bransford's lines:

Earth, Air, Ocean, came in desolate grace,
With natal gifts of elemental rune,
Like the three souls of saga to commune

Each with his hollow breast, and empty face,
Over the ancient cradle of my race,
Each with a sorrow:—in a broken tune
Bars of that long-lost epic I have hewn
Out of a wandering heart on windy ways.

This sets the key for the subjects dealt with in his substantial collection of sixty-five poems, which include poignant lines that remind one of Alfred Noyes' unforgetable *Victory Ball.* Such poems include *The Woman Who Shrieked Against Peace, Streets of Gold, The Women at the Corner Stand, Jack,* and the *Statemen Debonair.* For instance, *The Women at the Corner Stand:*

The women at the corners stand. They say,
"Where are the men you stole from us away?
Where are they now, the laughing lovers whom
You heaped in sombre ranks against the gloom?"
They murmur ceaselessly and without haste,
"Our arms are empty and our wombs are waste,"
"Where are the men that marched into the dusk?"
They say with voices withered like a husk.
"Night is like cinders: day is lean and stern.
Our hearts are parched with thirsting; yea, we burn.
Where are the men you took? Bid them return."

The women at the corners stand. But no
Reply is heard. They wait till night. They go
Back to their homes. Once more they come next day,
"Where are the men you stole from us away?"
They draw their shawls around their heads.
They wait.
They say, "But we are weary. It is late."
They murmur ceaselessly and without haste,
"Our arms are empty and our wombs are waste."
No word is said to them. But only they,
The women at the corners, stand. They say,
"Send back our lovers whom you stole away."

But when you seek counsel from his preferences you are called from the dramas that he has unfolded in the above mentioned poems by a brief statement that his favorites are pastorals. He writes:

Thanks for your charming interest in my Dutton volume, *Prophet and Fool*. I rather think my poems *Numbers* and *Shepherd Singing Ragtime* are the pieces I like most in the present volume. . . . I wish the greatest success to your fascinating innovation in THE POETRY REVIEW.

Lack of space limits us to the closing stanzas from the *Shepherd Singing Ragtime :*

There is not mortal man who knows
From whence the shepherd's song arose :
It came a thousand years ago.

Once the world's shepherds woke to lead
The folded sheep that they might feed
On green downs where the winds blow.

One shepherd sang a golden word.
A thousand miles away one heard.
One sang it swift, one sang it slow.

Two skylarks heard, two skylarks told
All shepherds this same song of gold
On all downs where the winds blow.

This is the song that shepherds must
Sing till the green downlands be dust
And tide of sheep-drift no more flow ;

The song two skylarks told again
To all the sheep and shepherd men
On green downs where winds blow.

In *Sierran Pan and other Poems* (Pacific Short Story Club) Henry Meade Bland gives the poetry world the poetic expressions of a gifted scholar with an artist's appreciation of color and form.

Edwin Markham, the American national laureate, in the foreword makes a valuable contribution by a characteristic review. He says :—

Poetry writing is as practical as bread-making ; and, from a high ground, it is just as necessary to the life of man. Poetry is bread

for the spirit: is the bread that is made of earthly wheat and yet is mixed with some mystic tincture of the skies. It nourishes all the higher hopes and aspirations of man.

Imagination rules the world: it builds homes, it builds cities, it builds nations. It is also the winged spirit that builds all poesy, revealing the beautiful in the commonplace, voyaging into the unknown and giving to airy nothing a local habitation and a name. It is imagination that transforms the ruin into a shrine of pilgrimage, the bunting into the banner of a people, the horde into a nation of free men.

And I commend in all persons not only the reading of poetry, but also the writing thereof, I ask, however, that all writers of verse shall make a serious study of the lyric art, and become acquainted at first hand with the nobler poetry of the world. Poetry-writing tends to keep alive the idealities of the spirit and to keep us ever young and in touch with the higher realities of existence. It helps to open the skylight under the great stars.

Henry Meade Bland has long known the dear delights the Muses bring to the client of Apollo. For years he has read the great poets, studied their lyric art, and has taught many groups of young folk to know and love the poets of the world; and from the printed page he has helped to make known the literary promise and performance of the Far West.

Beside this important service, he has turned some of his happy moments into poems; and these are now going forth in a little shallop of song. Mr. Bland touches various chords of poesy; but to my mind he rises to his height in poems like *The North Wind*, *The End of Summer*, *Sunrise on the Sierras*, *The Wind Among the Eaves*, and in some of his other poems where he touches wild nature. It is clear everywhere in these pages that he rejoices in the wild marches, in the mountain trails, and in the free winds of our California, a land romantic and beautiful.

As for Mr. Bland's other poems, I find in his ballad on *Sir Henry Hudson* so good a swing that I am surprised that this poet has not given more attention to ballad poetry. Another poem that catches my eye is his *Reconciliation*. This lyric seems to have sprung out of some piercing personal affliction; it reaches therefore into our own hearts. Here are some of the stanzas:—

"Where lupins bloom and poppies blow
And poplars tower to the sky
And the long lines of new-sown wheat
Slope down to where the marches lie,

'Tis there beneath the poplar shade,
  Watched by a thousand lupin eyes,
Asleep and alone in a dim, dim night
  My own, my matchless Harold lies.

O cruel plover, cry no more
  Like moaning tide or sullen wind ;
For all unmeet it is to grieve
  Except for those who fare behind."

Sierran Pan, the title poem, is Mr. Bland's favorite. This poem is characterised by Professor Charles Mills Gayley, of the English, California University, as a "perfect lyric" :—

I am fire and dew and sunshine,
  I am mist on the foamy wave,
I'm the rippling note from the field-lark's throat,
  I'm the jewel hid in the cave.

I'm the lightning flash on the mountain,
  And the cold rose-red of the dawn,
I'm the odor of pine and purple wine,
  And the willowy leap of the fawn.

I'm the sigh of the south wind of autumn.
  I'm the scent of the earth at first rain,
I'm the wild honker call of the earliest fall,
  I'm the yellow of ripening grain.

I'm the music no singer has dreamed of,
  I'm the joy in the heart of man ;
I'm the lyric time of no poet's ryhme,
  I'm the glad, the immortal Pan.

Mr. Bland's Sonnet is especially interesting apropos the renaissance of the sonnet :—

Each line should be five-petaled, a wild rose ;
Five accent-flowerets, iambs richly blown ;
Tho' a trochaic oft a line may crown ;
Then, as the coast a wavy shadow blows,

An anapest with radiant ripple glows ;
But twine it third or fourth. Your rhyme should own
Wordsworthian cadence prime, the which alone
Yields the strange fruit the poet's Eden grows.

This was the garland love-lord Petrarch flung
To gentle Laura. Such the mystic leaf
Rare Milton nurtured in his paradise.
Such blossoms soothed Hugh Stuart's blinded eyes ;
Such bore the heavenly-flowered spring-time sheaf,
The manna that made Keats divinely young.

"Delicate and fresh imagery, full of passion and the flavor of a distinctive personality, these poems are melodious and moving. There are lyrics in rhyme and rhythm, others in free verse, and a sequence of sonnets."

Thus a writer epitomises the contents of *Sea Change* (Macmillan) by Muna Lee (Mrs. Luis Munoz Marim). Like her poems, her letters charm and reflect the pleasant personality and unusual gentility of approach that characterise the works of this poet, as will be noted from the following letter :—

"I think your plan of asking the writer which of his poems appeals most to him is interesting. The few judgments of the sort I have seen have usually been surprising—by which I mean the poet has rarely liked best of his work the poem that I myself liked best—but that fact only made it all the more interesting !

"As for my own book, the poems that I like best, that is, the poems that evoke for me most completely the mood under the influence of which they were written, are *Gifts*, *Melilot*, *My Dreams of You Are Sombre in the Twilight*, and X–XII of the sonnets. The one that has been most generally liked, or at least most quoted, is *Melilot*.

"I am accepting with much pleasure your invitation to contribute to The Poetry Review by sending you a sonnet on that typically American subject, the old blue coverlet. My own example of that beautiful handicraft (made, so the legend woven into the corner says, in Indiana in 1851) has always fascinated me, making me wonder what type of woman, and why, would undertake the laborious and intricate weaving in the midst of the privations and dangers of frontier life seventy years ago. Hence the sonnet.

"Do you think that The Poetry Review would be interested in

'the other Americans,' the South Americans? I am halfway through the work of translating my anthology of modern Spanish-American poetry, and some of the work produced down there, particularly the sonnets, are charming. It may interest you to learn that Miss Reese's beautiful *Tears* has been translated into Spanish by my husband, who has introduced many living Americans to the Spanish-reading public. I am glad that your article and your own moving sonnet call attention to Miss Reese's exquisite and too little celebrated art.

Gifts and *Melilot* follow :—

GIFTS.

These are but words, and I have more than these to give you ;
I have moments to give you, delicate as fern-leaves,
Cloudy and clear as quartz,
Colored like rose-hips and wild grasses,
Various as the infinite rain.

I have hours to give you like stretches of shell-strewn beach,
(The sea within sight, within sound)—
And hours when there are no shells, no beach,
But only sea. I have years to give you :
These are but words.

MELILOT.

Behind the house is the millet-plot,
And past the millet, the stile,
And then a hill where melilot
Grows with wild camomile.

There was a youth who bade me goodbye
Where the hill rises to meet the sky.
I think my heart broke, but I have forgot
All but the scent of the white melilot.

From the sequence of sonnets entitled *Foreword* I excerpt the following lines :—

I have known laughter : make me blind with tears.

* * *

Follow all paths that wings and spread sails know.

* * *

Until you gave Earth meaning, giving me
The love that lifts to hear and see.

* * *

The poems of the lawyer-soldier-poet William Alexander Percy, *Enzio's Kingdom and Other Poems*, *In April Once* (Yale University Press) and *Sappho In Levkas and Other Poems*, and numerous contributions to periodicals have been accentuated by dynamic imagery and richness of expression that vitalise even subjects that might otherwise sink into disturbing somberness.

The "Canadian voice" in his *Night Off Gallipoli* (*In April Once*) thrills you with—

> Such blood, so young, so proud!
> No Homer will rise up
> To sing their deeds; for deeds
> There be too great for song,
> And heroes must be few to stir the rage.

Autumnal, from the same book, gives us the picture of the autumn wind :—

> Filled with the wings of wild birds southward blown
> And with the wings of leaves that only fly
> Their red and golden flight when they are dead.

As to Mr. Percy's favorites. He writes :—

"I am afraid I am an impartial father and have not centered my affections on any one of my children. Of course the long poem means most to me, but of the lyrics, if I had to choose, I should have to mention as particular objects of my affections, *Overtones*, *A Volunteer's Grave*, and *For Them That Died in Battle*.

Overtones is a brief pen-etching :—

> I heard a bird at break of day
> Sing from the autumn trees
> A song so mystical and calm,
> So full of certainties,
> No man, I think, could listen long
> Except upon his knees.
> Yet this was but a simple bird
> Alone, among dead trees.

A Volunteer's Grave strikes a meditative note. Having served with the 37th Division in France, receiving discharge

as captain, this poet reminds us, lest we forget, of those who lost their life in the world war. We are prone to forget

Yet what have all the centuries
Of purpose, pain, and joy
Bequeathed us lovelier to recall
Than this dead boy!

For a World and *The Unloved From his Beloved* from *Euzio's Kingdom* follow :—

How shall you ever know the adoration
I spread like samite cloths beneath your feet?
How shall you guess the brooding desolation
Learned from your eyes so passionless and sweet?

There must be some word like the star that pauses
In summer's rose transparency of dusk,
Or like the bird-note heard through slumber's gauzes
The unsilvering hour before dew warms to musk.

There must be some one word that is more tender
Than any word my lips have ever learned,
Without which I can never, never render
In speech the love your cool sweet love has earned.

You know as none my heart's forlorn distresses,
Its passionate tides, its daily tint and glow—
Why must there be within obscure recesses
This tenderness of love you cannot know?

THE UNLOVED FROM HIS BELOVED.

Could I pluck down Aldebaran
And haze the Pleiades in your hair
I could not add more burning to your beauty
Or lend a starrier coldness to your air.

If I were cleaving terrible waters
With death ahead on the visible sands
I could not turn and stretch my hands more wildly,
More vainly turn and stretch to you my hands.

ALICE HUNT BARTLETT.

SOME ASPECTS OF POETRY.

WE have said some severe things about anthologies—too frequently slip-shod, lazy compilations from other collections, showing no individual judgment or preference. But two of the species that have reached us recently are an entire delight. One of them is the *Shorter Poems of the 18th Century*, for which Mr. Iolo A. Williams, whose earlier *Byways Round Helicon* is a diverting kind of anthology, is responsible (Heinemann, 10s. 6d. net). Mr. Williams has ransacked other collections, but he has not been dependent on them. He knows his period and he has enthusiasm tempered with judgment, and the result is a most readable book, a collection of fine poetry, so comprehensive and thorough that it should stimulate discussion and lead to a reassessment of the value of the poetry of the 18th century considered as a whole. We could imagine many meetings of Poetry Society groups being used profitably and wisely in the reading and discussion of this anthology, together with Braithwaite's two bulky volumes of Restoration and Georgian verse and Chambers's old Encyclopædia of English Literature.

* * *

The Northern Muse (Nelson, 10s. 6d.) is another welcome anthology. It is a collection of Scottish vernacular poems selected by Mr. John Buchan for their literary value. In a masterly introduction to his 245 poems, to which a comprehensive commentary is added, Mr. Buchan points out that "many Scots poets have a vogue altogether independent of their poetic merit; these I have neglected and have confined my choice to pieces which in varying degree seem to me to be literature, from a bottle song just redeemed from doggerel by some quaintness of fancy to the high flights of Burns and Dunbar." The golden period of Scottish poetry is fully and nobly represented and some little contemporary work is given but not adequately represented. Here Mr. Buchan has been timid: it cannot be that his acquaintance with contemporary writers is as limited and conventional as that of the average anthologist who owes all he knows to preceding anthologies. Perhaps he expects us to regard that admirable modern collection, *Northern Numbers* (Foulis), as a complementary volume.

* * *

We have remarkably little criticism of modern poetry that is sane and balanced and reasoned. Daily we receive applications for "introductions to modern poetry" and essays on contemporary poets and have little to recommend. Mr. Alfred Noyes deals with *Some Aspects* (Hodder and Stoughton, 7s. 6d. net) and partially fills the gap. Almost alone among the modern poets who turn

critics, Mr. Noyes can write with detachment and sobriety. He is a master of English literature in the truest sense and not a special pleader or time-server. We regret the more that his new prose volume is not more than a collection of essays, admirable in themselves, full of meat, illuminating and constructive, and with a vein of continuity running through them. Yet each is self-contained and does not gradually build up and prove an overwhelming case for clear reasoned assessment of values—they remain separate essays on "some aspects" and not chapters of a compact, homogeneous work on modern poetry. *Poetry, Old and New, Some Aspects of Modern Poetry, Tennyson and Some Critics, Some Characteristics of Modern Literature* (by which the author means "poetry"), may be taken as detached chapters of this much needed work, and we would like to trace the principles of Mr. Noyes' poetics as advanced in these essays or lectures, the continuity of which is broken into by other less modern aspects—the Spirit of Touchstone, Shakespeare and the Sea, The Nature Poets of the 18th Century and other miscellaneous papers which may be literary but are not pertinent.

* * *

Mr. Noyes writes with authority and insight, and as a director of poetic taste, the enunciator of sound poetic principles, he ought to fill a greater place and meet a widespread demand. He deals faithfully with the more dangerous type of charlatan—the blatant squeaker of his own trifling merits and of greater men's demerits is better left to the seclusion of his own feeble clique—and is at his most vigorous when reasserting the greatness of Tennyson. "It must have been disturbing to the complacency of some of our moderns to find a living critic of so wide a range as Mr. Saintsbury placing Tennyson, with Vergil, among the twelve greatest writers of the world, in any age and in any tongue. But the plain truth is that a very large part of the recent depreciation of Tennyson comes from those who are quite unaware of the regions of thought in which he moved. On the technical side of his art, also, there are subtleties which cannot possibly be appreciated by critics, who, demonstrably, do not know of their existence. A long and devoted novitiate is required before any man can appreciate the finer points of craftsmanship in any art; and to look for criticism of any real value upon the art of Tennyson from some of the coteries of to-day would be like asking a puppy to direct the hand of a great surgeon during a delicate operation. . . . The modern world must realise the plain fact that the masters of any art are often utterly beyond the range of those who depreciate them at the present day. I can only suggest that the substitution of a

little humility for the prevalent conceit, the substitution of a little readiness to learn a few elementary technical details for the assumption of universal knowledge, might help us to a more real appreciation of the art of poetry, and might make us hesitate before we indulged in the easy dismissal of the masters."

* * *

Mr. John Freeman's *English Portraits and Essays* (Hodder and Stoughton, 7s. 6d. net) should be similarly acceptable and helpful in so far as it deals with modern poets and poetry. But this poet turned critic suffers from the general weakness of his class—a weakness that vitiates the contemporary literary essay as a whole. He is not aloof and detached, neither is he fighting stoutly and single-handed in the arena. He belongs to a group of friends of considerable literary attainment and geniality who possess the rare quality of loyalty to their set ; when he deals with contemporary work and tendencies it is of these friends and neighbours that he writes, genially, agreeably. A fair example of his generous praise is found in the Maurice Hewlett essay with which we disagree almost entirely, from the opening statement that " the narrative tradition of English poetry died a lingering, certain death in the immense collection of Tennyson's verse " to the concluding assertion that " he (Maurice Hewlett) has heard the undertones of the dead as well as the humble living, and in his evocation of a voice he has added to the purest and oldest tradition of English poetry." No " Quarterly " flavour seasons the similar " Walter de la Mare " essay, but Mr. Freeman is graceful and not fulsome in the fashion of a recent volume on the same subject which was too utterly lacking in discrimination for an amateur magazine.

* * *

Messrs. Dent, in a note to W. H. Hudson's last volume, *A Hind in Richmond Park* (16s. net), say : "This book contains the last words of the great naturalist, who through the power of his love reveals the beauty of things animate and inanimate in the world in which he lived such a long, full, ecstatic life, in spite of the sadness and the loneliness that were always his." Mr. Hudson was much more than a naturalist. He was one with the eye of a naturalist, the mind of a philosopher, and the heart of a poet. This particular volume deals with the senses of animals (including man), and mostly the less considered senses, those of panic, of special smell, of direction, of migration, of antipathies, and of the response to music. His facts, collected by observation and research, are always scrupulously correct, but unlike many other recorded technicalities, they are so inter-

woven with reminiscences and anecdotes, and so illustrated by discursive reflections, that they make the most delightful as well as the most instructive reading. One experiences a feeling of intense sadness when realising that the pen that is laid down in the last chapter is laid down for ever.

One is also regretful to hear of the death of Mr. Alexander G. Steven, whose posthumous work is rather difficult to review, for it is a natural impulse only "to speak kindly of the dead," yet merely "to damn with faint praise" is really the poorest kind of tribute that can be paid to an author's art. To be frank and unbiassed, then, —the poems in *Lures* (McKellar Press) do not entirely satisfy, charming though many of them are. The poet's intense love of all that Nature stands for almost chokes his utterance at times. Yet it is worth while, for when his voice becomes obedient to his heart we read such a verse as this from "Mean Street":

"My heart lies in the country of dreams, where the rivers of healing run;
But my feet pass heavily down the street, narrow and mean and dun,
And were it not for the dreams in my heart, my soul would lack the sun."

* * *

Canadian poets are hardly well enough known in this country yet, though Canada is not backward at her Letters. That she appreciates her own authors was shown by that little section in the Canadian pavilion at Wembley—a corner of well-filled shelves and framed poems. It is more than probable that the poetical works of Albert Durrant Watson (Ryerson Press, Toronto) was to be found on those shelves, for Mr. Watson is no insignificant writer. I do not judge him by his lyrics, which are on the whole disappointing (such a commonplace as "divine love" not infrequently occurs), but by his reflective poems, his sonnets, and, above all, by those monologues called "The Immortals," studies in blank verse of those great characters in history and art that most strongly appealed to him. His subjects range from Moses and Sappho to Walt Whitman and Wagner, and are all illuminating.

* * *

In an anthology one expects a high standard of poetic excellence, for is it not the cream of many pans of milk? Members of London's University College in *Poems* 1923–24 (Blackmore) yield a fair quality of cream, so that I hardly like to particularise. Still, the poems I consider the best are "The Happy Bather," by C. R. Allison;

"The Shower," by Marjorie S. Deans; "The Rover," by Ruth Harpham; "Requiem," by C. L. Harris; "The Stone Knight," by W. G. Ingram. Very few of the 56 poems fail to please, and many are arresting.

There is a medley of quality as well as of matter in A. Elliott's *Little Medley Book* (Partridge and Love). Many of the fables, for instance, are quite boring (fable style is rather an acquired taste to begin with), but others, such as "The Fly" and "The Quipmaker and the Queen," are wholly delightful. Much the same may be said of the poems—many are merely trite, while others give great pleasure, being artistic in conception and execution and probing well into the heart of things. Good samples are "A Ballad of English Will," "The Wren," the "Three Sonnets on Laughter," and "The Word of a Mystic," and I must not forget to mention two particularly happy nonsense verses, "The Dutiful Sons" and "Reorganisation."

* * *

Miss Lena Ashwell prefaced a reading of some modern poems at the Savoy Chapel with some excellent remarks on the vocal interpretation of poetry. "Feeling things is more important than seeing things," she declared, in expressing her interest in "the movement for recognising the beauty of sound and language." Poets whom she had heard read their own verse were inclined to insist on rhythm to the destruction of the sense. It was possible to get the rhythm, the sense and the music of fine poetry if one worked hard enough and long enough. Good results in the vocal interpretation of poetry were not to be obtained without taking pains. She recognised in modern poetry a distinct apprehension of the invisible world, just as Shakespeare and Spenser were aware of it—an invisible reality with which our lives are in touch.

Mr. John Bailey is the "reader" on November 3rd, Matthew Arnold being his subject. On November 17th Miss Ena May Howe will read from Thomas Hardy and on the following Monday the Cowper anniversary will be recognised by Mr. Wright, of the Cowper Society. For complete programme and reserved seats application should be made to the General Secretary.

* * *

The Lady Howard de Walden has granted the use of Seaford House, Belgrave Square, for the annual recital by holders of the silver medal in competition for the Lady Margaret Gold Medal on November 12th at 7.30 p.m. Miss Lena Ashwell hopes to be able to attend to present the awards which will be made by Dr. H. H. Hulbert. Admission by ticket only, particulars of which may be obtained from the General Secretary.

MISS BUCK AND DR. KIRTLAN: AN ENQUIRY.

To the Editor of The Poetry Review.

Sir,—In an article on "The Wayland-Dietrich Saga," Doctor J. B. Kirtlan waxes enthusiastic over the verse of Miss Buck. He says, "If Miss Buck can maintain the high level of her description 'of that night in June,' she will——add some fine poetry to our literature." Happy Miss Buck! But what was the matter with me? Was I sleepy or stupid that, try as I would, I could only read a "modiste's description of a gown in that night in June"? This is what I made of it:—

One dress I'll ne'er forget . . . o'er the far hem
Crept a faint purple flush . . . The hidden skirt
From folds of rosy grey cast golden streaks
That deepened into orange, tarnished, shrank
And vanished, leaving hue of lavender;
When chilly grew my neck, then cunningly
The grey scarf to my hand . . . a deep rose red
Tinged the grey edges, soon to fade away
In tender shades of pink . . . The soft grey cloud
Rolling around me, o'er it sailed my face
A powdered moon . . . Purple twine'd in hair . . .
A deep imperial purple, crimson tinged . . .
In little ears the burnished gold appeared
Paling to lemon, orange shade between
These merged in blue green and soft tints of jade
To melt at last in blue infinity.
Upon my eyelids lilac shades 'gan fall
Beneath the gas lights of the heated room.

Faint murmurs rising from my Aunt below
Fell on our ears not unmelodiously,
And in mysterious silence died away.
Far off some pianola soft did play;
The ball-room waiters silently put out
The bracket lamps . . The servants brought warm wraps.

Now I have read and re-read Miss Buck's lines, and these again and again till I do not know which is which. Please, Mr. Editor, come to my aid! But . . . *I have it.* Miss Buck is using the June night as a symbol for a gown. She is going to add some fine poetry to our advertisements.

Arthur Hood.

THE PREMIUM EDITOR'S LETTER.

WORK for The Poetry Review is not unrewarded. It is a heartsome thing to watch promising writers turn gradually into poets; or, to put it more practically, to see names passing upward from the commended list to the pinnacle of the premium. This month's competition is on a level, beating all previous records, and the prize might have been awarded without a qualm to any one of the following :—

Ethel Holdsworth.
F. A. Carter.
Florence M. Bradford.
E. M. Frampton.
" Maris Johns."
Irene Petch.
" Philomel."
E. Joyce Harrison.
Honor F. Leeke.
Evelyn D. Bangay.
C. S. Jarvis.
" D. G. J."
" Victor Ballan."
Edna A. Kahla.
Charles G. Mortimer.
Cyril G. Taylor.
Nancy Pollok.
E. M. Atkinson.
Barbara E. Smythe.
Blanche Jones.
D. F. Radford.
Vera I. Arlett.
S. Marguerite Goode.
Eva Dobell.

Such circumstances induce an unwonted diffidence in judgment: I came to a definite conclusion at last, however, and handed them without comment to the inspection of another critic. As his decision was the same as my own, the premium is awarded, undivided, to Miss Kahla. Here are both her entries :—

AT AIX-LES-BAINS.

Music.

And all the time the shadow-leaves,
Dark, elusive, and uncertain,
Dance on the golden, sunlit curtain.

All the while the music weaves,
In its rhythmic rise and fall,
Fancy's mystic tapestries,
Dark designs on a golden wall :
Dim elusive images
On the curtain of my mind.

EDNA A. KAHLA.

CONTRAST.

Sleep, in the stillness of my darkened room,
Awaits the moment when my mind shall break
Its journeying through the unforgotten days :
Yet in pursuit of haunting memories,
Long hours I lie awake.

Outside, I know, a misted autumn moon
Shows wanly through the wind-tormented trees,
That shall be leafless soon :
While the far, indigo skies
Of Syria are all ablaze with stars,
So troublous beautiful.

To-night I roam the unforgotten roads,
Narrow, and rough, and wearying, but sweet
With the first fragrance of the orange flowers.
Here sounds no passing of late wandering feet ;
The houses of Beyrouth, 'neath the moon's shroud
Lie heavy, and white, and still. . . .
But there is music
Haunting the moonlight hours,
In one remembered garden by the sea.

While in the bay, the little swaying ships
Keep the slow lilt of the sea :
And golden lanterns shed their shimmering gleam,
Where lie the white ghosts of a thousand stars,
Rocking adream.

* * * * *

The little winds that have outlived the day
Trouble the night with sighs ;
One English star looks in upon my dreams,
From the blue deep of the skies.

EDNA A. KAHLA.

The others must regard themselves as more than "highly" commended, and we hope to print all their entries. Book prizes will be sent to Mrs. Jarvis, Miss Goode, Miss Blanche Jones, Miss Holdsworth, Miss Bradford, and (Mr.) "Victor Ballan."

Writers who have never been "commended" seem to have a greater tendency to fall off. "Courage, mes camarades!" Academicians will tell you that no examination is worth a sleepless night, once you have passed "matric." This time we have to commend :—

Gertrude M. Marriage.
Elizabeth Wild.
Lilian Bird.
E. M. Kelly.
Ruth Baxendale Price,
Florence Overton.
Petronella O'Donnell.
"Florence Cortis-Stanford."
Doris E. Rymer.
B. Sowerby.

Let us look at some of the rest : *My Mary* is light verse and is out of court at once ; *A Song in Autumn* condenses to *Summer's Gone and so are You*—no new thought ; *And Jesus Wept* is in every respect what one would anticipate ; then we have *Goldenway* :—

> " Penniless Peers, but their blood is blue,
> Sons of a stock to the Empire true.
> Jostling along, how he apes the Peer,
> The shifty form of the profiteer " ;

and so on, a perfect example of how not to write. *The Tide* is about some dreams that went out with the ebb and may return with the flood ; *There is no Hope* and *Given Up* say in effect " How strange ! I am alive and shall be dead." So we might go on. There is a history of a deaf old lady who told a story " in company," beginning it just after someone else had ended it ; and there is another of two labourers who were to carry a plank from one shed to another—they performed the journey and the return, but forgot the plank. Both these Christmas stories have morals for writers of verse.

The best criticism of Mr. W. H. Davies' poem, *The Inexpressible*, comes from " Beech-nut," and reads as follows :—

" It is easy to be ungenerous to this poem. It is spinous with little graceless faults and rough phrasing. For instance, ' Thinking my scent is drops of ink ' is cakeworthy in its singular-plural equation ; and ' my scent ' is unfortunate in any case ; the omission to repeat ' thinking ' before the second verse makes an ellipsis so awkward that its effect is that of a ' mixed construction.' If ' these things,' as you would put it, ' distract the reader's attention from the content,' they are bad. The paucity of rhyme—there is only one in the whole poem—does *not* challenge attention ; so, conversely, it is not a fault.

" The content of the poem is very fine. It is easy to say ' Can books sing ? ' Of course they can : this is that analogy, that condensed metaphor, which you so strongly commend as against the simile. It is easy to say ' Can hot passions make *anything* run cold ? ' but, after all, the common freezing machine is actuated by heat.

" I cannot see how any poet can fail to love these verses : they are the aspiration and experience common to all of us ; and the title is unfair to the author, though he balances, against this, a pretended disbelief in the well-founded proposition that the poem is greater than the poet—a momentary disbelief, perhaps, not incongruous with the mood in which such a poem must have been conceived. Finally, has the poem a climax ? Well, rather ! "

Excellent criticisms were also received from Nancy Pollok, Blanche Jones, Gertrude Marriage and Honor F. Leeke. Miss Leeke's book, by the way, will be out any week now; she has called it *A Cloud of Singing Things* (part of a line from *The Bees Swarm*), and allotted me the very pleasant and honourable task of writing the introduction.

The criticisms to be attempted for next issue are of Miss Wrangham's poem on page 16 in No. 2 of *Poetry of To-day*.

O. C. DE C. E.

The usual general premium of £2 for the best poem or poems submitted to the Premium Editor during the month (without limitation of subject) is continued, and six books will be awarded to the "highly commended."

* * *

An interesting interchange of meetings has been arranged this session between the members of the Bath and Bristol Centres. On November 15th Miss Spender, the Hon. Secretary of the Bath Centre, is reading a paper in Clifton on "Little Poems," and on December 6th Miss J. P. Nott is reading one at Bath on "American Poets of the 19th Century," to be illustrated by recitations by some of the younger members of the Clifton Centre. Other meetings are arranged for the New Year, when Mrs. Rogers and Mr. Tabor Davies will go from the Clifton Centre to read papers in Bath.

* * *

The opening of the autumn session of the Chelsea Centre of the Poetry Society on October 14th at the President's house was a specially interesting one. Several well-known actors and actresses most kindly took parts in Miss Beringer's delightful adaptation of Molière's *Femmes Savantes*.

At the meeting on November 11th, at 5.30, Mlle. de Holthoir will give her witty account of the Poets of the "Cabarets Artistiques" of Paris. As these meetings are specially crowded Mrs. Hugh Spender regrets she cannot continue to admit members of other Centres unless specially invited. On December 9th Mr. Wilfred Fletcher will deal with "Dramatic Poets."

Two performances of an Eastern play by Miss Frances A. McCallum, *The House on the Wall*, which deals with the position of poets in the State and turns on the theme, "where there is no vision the people perish," will be given by the Players of the Gate at the Scala Theatre, Charlotte Street, W.1, on November 16th and 17th.

Owing to the commandeering of the Hall for political purposes, Miss Ena Hay Howe's Recital at the Chelsea Town Hall, announced in our previous issue, has been postponed from October 14th to December 4th at King George's Hall.

THE PROGRESS OF THE POETRY SOCIETY.

AT the annual general business meeting of The Poetry Society (Incorporated), at the University of London, South Kensington, on June 21st, 1924, the Treasurer (Mr. C. Oscar Gridley) presented the annual financial statement, which showed, he pointed out, a satisfactory financial position. Income again showed substantial improvement, and although additional expenditure had been necessary, the year closed with a total balance of funds in hand of £254 5s. 1d., as compared with £150 9s. 6d. the previous year, and in addition they had stock and book debts amounting to £129 12s. 11d. and no outstanding liabilities. (Applause.) THE POETRY REVIEW account showed an increase in publishing receipts and subscriptions and a small decrease in printing charges. A sound financial position had been gained ; the REVIEW might be regarded as self-supporting, and special attention could now be given to the long-deferred matter of increased secretarial and office payments. (Hear, hear.) Since the last general meeting the Society had been incorporated and the expenses connected therewith had been paid by special donations and would not affect the satisfactory balance at their credit. (Applause.) The report and statement were adopted and the Treasurer cordially thanked for his devoted services and careful administration of the funds.

The Secretary's report was read and approved. It stated that during the period covered by the report " important expansions have taken place, the most significant being the conclusion of the business of Incorporation, thus placing the Society on a definite basis, consolidating its constitution, enhancing its prestige and bringing to a successful issue fourteen years' continuous work and experience. The necessity for having a reserve fund to meet the inevitable legal charges has ever been borne in mind and provided for, and it is very gratifying to record that eventually the process of Incorporation was carried through without expense to the Society.

" Another important development that is having beneficial results in extending our organisation in the United States is the inclusion of an American Section in THE POETRY REVIEW. We have to acknowledge the strenuous and indefatigable labours of Mrs. W. Hunt Bartlett, now the American representative on the General Council. Further developments as the results of her efforts are pending, including the formation of State Chapters of the Society, while additional Centres were being formed at home.

" It is satisfactory to note that while the high standard has been maintained, the extension of the Society's examinations in the Art of Reading and Speaking Verse continues, and to find the demand for them growing in the provinces, where their importance, significance,

and value, both to teachers and students, are being recognised to such an extent that we may confidently expect that instead of our examiners being occasionally engaged they will be regularly occupied. The entries during the year numbered 446. One result of these examinations is a steadily increasing demand for occasional lectures. This demand the Society is endeavouring to supply by the appointment of Poetry Society Lecturers and Lectureships.

"We should be able to record next year considerable developments in India, following on the active interest taken by His Highness the Mir of Khairpur, who has become a patron and intends to interest other Indian princes.

"The administrative work involved in carrying on the work of the Society is now the wholetime occupation of several people and will become further onerous. We trust that members will take a deeper interest in the general work of the Society, thus giving practical expression to their appreciation for the aims and objects we are banded together to promote."

The General Council was re-elected, and Mr. Hawker re-appointed hon. auditor.

At the conclusion of the meeting Mr. Kyle was invested with the insignia of the Order of the Redeemer which had been received that morning from Athens, and Mrs. Mends Gibson (the Kensington Centre President) and Mr. Gridley very warmly appraised Mr. Kyle's services to the Society.

At the ensuing annual meeting of the General Council the President (Mr. W. F. Rawnsley) and Treasurer were continued and confirmed in office.

* * *

The autumn general examination in the art of reading and speaking verse will be held at the University of London, South Kensington, on November 22nd. Entries must be received not later than the 20th. The Society's examiners will be at Doncaster on November 24th, Sheffield 26th, Manchester 26th, and at Arnside, Grange and Seascales on the 27th and 28th. Dr. Hulbert will lecture in each place.

* * *

The autumn programme of the Shortlands Centre is:

October 14th.—Similes.
October 28th.—Scotch, Welsh and Irish Poems.
November 11th.—Poems on Classical Subjects.
November 25th.—Henry VIII.
December 9th.—Poems on Love.

The Barnet Centre, which meets at 8.15 p.m., was favoured on October 25th with a delightful presidential address by Sir Owen Seaman on "The Love Poems of Browning."

The November and December meetings are:

November 6th.—Sea Poems: Readings by members at "Randwick," Manor Road.

November 20th.—Debate: "Georgian *v.* Victorian Poets," at the Grammar School.

December 5th.—*Romeo and Juliet*, at 35, Wood Street.

December 19th.—*The Critic*, by Sheridan, at 30, Ravenscroft Park.

On Friday, January 9th, *Cymbeline* will be read at 35, Wood Street.

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The Manchester Centre opened the autumn season on September 25th with a very successful social evening, held at the Training College, Princess Street. The first lecture of the session was delivered by the Rev. S. Proudfoot, M.A., in the New Arts Buildings (Lime Grove), Mr. Wright of the University in the chair. The lecturer took for his subject "The Literature of Power," and traced, from the earliest Biblical writers, through Homer, Plato, Virgil, Chaucer, More, Milton, and the nineteenth century poets and writers, the spiritual power of literature, working forcefully and irresistibly for the uplifting of the human soul. Mr. Wright, who is one of the lecturers on Literature at the University, gave an able résumé of the most salient points of the lecture, emphasising the reference to Darwin as an exponent of evolution in the widest sense of the term. This meeting was held in conjunction with *The University Literary Circle*, and two other lectures will be given at Lime Grove during the session.

Through the courtesy of the Earl of Crawford and Balcarres (Chancellor of the University of Manchester), members have each received, and much appreciated, a printed copy of his lecture on "John Lyly, the Euphuist," delivered at the University on February 28th. It is desired to place the appreciation of the members on record.

The following lectures have been arranged (at Princess Street, at 7.30 p.m.):

November 7th.—Campbell, Lover of Nature—Joseph Hawley.

November 21st.—"The Ethics of G. F. Watts"—Robert Bateman.

December 5th.—(Subject later)—Rev. B. Pollard, M.Sc.

December 12th.—Members' Night.

Further meetings will be announced in the January POETRY REVIEW.

The Centre library, which was much valued last session, will again be open to members, and it is hoped that new volumes may be added to the existing collection of works by modern poets. Intending members may receive further information from the Local Secretary, Miss Annie L. Knowles, 106, Devonshire Street, Higher Broughton, Manchester.

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The Sutton Centre meeting on December 10th should be particularly interesting, Mr. John Lee having undertaken to deal with "Poetry and Economics." "The Poetry of Childhood" is the subject for November 12th.

* * *

Members of the Kensington Centre—and others (visitors may attend on contributing towards local expenses)—are reminded that on November 20th Mr. Ashton Jonson deals with "John Masefield" at 5, Roland Houses, and on December 4th Commander Bellairs lectures on "Poetry and Politics" at 27, Campden House Court, W.8.

* * *

Epsom Centre members will prepare for an address on "Thomas Hardy" by Mr. Lissant on November 24th by a general reading of Hardy's Poems on the 10th. The December reading (8th) will be "Poets of the Eighteenth Century," and the lecturer (15th) Mr. Oram.

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For the services of Poetry Society's recognised lecturers on the significance and the appreciation of poetry, application should be made to the General Secretary. A special series of lectures for young people can be supplied to schools and colleges.

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Under the direction of Miss Scrivener, V.P., Professor on the staff of the Ladies' College, Cheltenham, a Cheltenham Centre of the Poetry Society has been formed.

* * *

In *The Dynamics of American Poetry* (V.) Poe is credited with the lines :—

> "Music resembles poetry ; in each
> Are nameless graces which no methods teach,
> And which a master hand alone can reach."

Of course these lines are Pope's, Mr. E. Holmes, Bristol, reminds us.